

**2015
Black Hills Mountain Lion Season:
Hunter Survey Results**

HD-4-15.AMS

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Division of Wildlife
Serving People, Managing Wildlife

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This report summarizes results from the South Dakota GFP's hunter survey for the 2015 Black Hills (including Custer State Park) mountain lion season. A mix-mode survey using both Internet and mail surveys was administered to all licensed mountain lion hunters. Overall, 2,238 hunters completed surveys for a total response rate of 70%

KEYWORDS: mountain lions; Black Hills; Custer State Park; hunter survey

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Executive Summary

2015 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season: Hunter Survey Results

HD-4-15.AMS

Cynthia L. Longmire, Ph.D.

- South Dakota's tenth Black Hills mountain lion season lasted 96 days, harvesting a total of 43 lions, 22 females and 21 males. 5 lions were harvested inside Custer State Park (CSP) and 38 lions within the Black Hills Fire Protection District outside CSP.
- A total of 3,210 licenses were sold prior to the conclusion of the Black Hills mountain lion season. 53% of licensed hunters reported spending some time hunting mountain lions. Approximately 1.2% of licensed lion hunters and 2.3% of active lion hunters (licensed hunters who spent some time hunting for mountain lions in the Black Hills season) were successful in harvesting a mountain lion.
- Hunters spent an average of 7.1 days hunting mountain lions. 3.17 mountain lions were harvested per 1,000 man-days hunted.
- On average, licensed hunters indicated they were slightly satisfied with the overall Black Hills season. Hunters successful in harvesting a lion, on average, indicated they were very satisfied.
- A total of 136 access permits were issued for Custer State Park (CSP). 66% of permitted hunters reported spending some time hunting mountain lions inside CSP (active permitted hunters). Approximately 3.7% of permitted hunters and 5.6% of active permitted hunters were successful in harvesting a mountain lion.
- On average, hunters who successfully harvested a mountain lion in CSP indicate a higher level of satisfaction with the CSP season structure compared with all CSP permit holders.
- On average, South Dakota mountain lion hunters want to see the mountain lion population decrease a little over the next five years. The percentage of lion hunters who want to see the mountain lion population in South Dakota decrease, however, has dropped from 64% in 2013 to 47% in 2015. While the percentage of hunters wanting the population to stay about the same has grown from 23% in 2013 to 32% in 2015, and hunters wanting to see the population increase has gone from 9% in 2013 to 15% in 2015.

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Introduction

South Dakota has held a resident-only mountain lion season since 2005. The 2015 mountain lion season offered an unlimited number of licenses and included a limited access season within Custer State Park (CSP). Residents were allowed one mountain lion license valid for taking a single lion during the 2015 season. Inside the Black Hills Fire Protection District, the season dates were set to run from December 26, 2014 to March 31, 2015, or until reaching the maximum harvest limit, whichever occurred first. The maximum harvest limit was set at 75 mountain lions or 50 female mountain lions. On land located outside the Black Hills Fire Protection District (statewide season), the 2015 mountain lion season was open year round.

Beginning in March of 2015 resident hunters were allowed to use hounds to pursue mountain lions year-round on private land outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District with permission of the landowner or lessee. Except for specified hunting intervals in CSP that allowed hunting with dogs, the use of dogs to hunt lions within the Black Hills Fire Protection District is not allowed. The use of traps or bait to hunt mountain lions is prohibited in South Dakota. Other restrictions include no taking of lions traveling together or spotted lions (kittens); no releasing of dogs on tracks indicating multiple lions traveling together; and a mandatory check-in of harvested lions within 24 hours of the kill. In addition, hunters using dogs in CSP must attempt to harvest the first legal mountain lion they have reasonable opportunity to harvest, except where the lion pursued shows obvious signs of lactation.

A limited number of free access permits to hunt mountain lions within CSP during specified hunting intervals were issued through a random drawing. The interval structure consisted of four hunting intervals 17 days in length, each having 30 access permits with no hunting with dogs allowed; and four hunting intervals seven days in length, each having four access permits and allowing hunting with dogs. Once an individual harvested a mountain lion or their designated hunting interval passed, their CSP Access Permit expired. If the Black Hills mountain lion season closed prior to the March 31st end date, mountain lion hunting within CSP also closed.

The 2015 Black Hills mountain lion season ran for the full 96 days and closed on March 31, 2015. A total of 43 mountain lions were harvested, 22 of which were females. This report summarizes results from the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks' (GFP) 2015 Black Hills lion hunter survey, including CSP hunters. Survey responses were collected in spring and early summer and covered hunting participation, satisfaction with the hunting season structures, and opinions regarding mountain lion populations. Information pertaining to mountain lion mortality and mountain lion harvest locations can be found on GFP's website, and subsequently will not be covered in this report.

Methods

All licensed mountain lion hunters at the time of season closing (N=3,210) were surveyed regarding their hunting experiences during the 2015 Black Hills mountain lion season, including CSP (appendix A). Hunters with a valid email address in the 2015 GFP license database (2,819) were sent an email invitation to complete the lion hunter survey via the internet using Qualtrics Survey Software. The online survey non-respondents and hunters without an email address were mailed a short questionnaire in May of 2015 following the Tailored Design Method (Dillman et al. 2014; Dillman 2007). All survey data was analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 20 software package.

Results

A total of 2,238 responses were received. Adjusting for undeliverable addresses, the total survey response rate was 70 percent (online response rate 60%; mail response rate 39%). There were no statistically significant differences found across the variables measured between responses received online and by mail.

Black Hills

A total of 52.6 percent (1,178 hunters) reported spending some time hunting for mountain lions within the Black Hills Fire Protection District, not including CSP, during the 2015 Black Hills Season, for an average of 7.1 days (table 1). Based on this reported participation rate, a total of 1,689 hunters were estimated to have hunted mountain lions in the Black Hills during the 2015 season. Half of active lion hunters¹ reported hunting 4 days or less. On average, hunters who were successful in harvesting a mountain lion reported spending more than double the number of days hunting lions than unsuccessful hunters.

Thirty-eight mountain lions were harvested during the 2015 Black Hills season, excluding lions harvested inside CSP. Success per licensed hunter (includes all hunters with a mountain lion license regardless of participation) was 1.2 percent. The estimated hunter success for active lion hunters was 2.3% (table 2).

¹ Active lion hunters are defined as licensed lion hunters who spent some time hunting mountain lions in the Black Hills Fire Protection District during the 2015 season.

Table 1: Number of days hunting mountain lions (excludes CSP)

2015 Black Hills Season		
Days	Active Hunters	Percent
1	115	9.8
2	180	15.3
3	182	15.5
4	125	10.6
5	130	11.1
6	71	6.0
7	40	3.4
8	45	3.8
9	7	0.6
10	91	7.8
11 to 20	134	11.4
21 to 30	31	2.6
31 or more	23	2.0
Total	1,174	100.0
	Hunters	Mean SE 95% CI
Active lion hunters	1,174	7.1 0.245 (6.6, 7.6)
Did not harvest a lion	1,141	6.9 0.239 (6.4, 7.3)
Harvested a lion	32	15.0 2.563 (9.9, 20.0)

Table 2: Hunter success statistics for 2015 season (excludes CSP)

2015 Black Hills Success Statistics	
Per licensed hunter	$(38/3,210) * 100 = 1.18\%$
Estimated number of active lion hunters	$3,210 * 0.526 = 1,689$
Estimated success per active lion hunter	$(38/1,689) * 100 = 2.25\%$

Harvest Per Unit Effort – Harvest per unit effort (HPUE) is a method used to indirectly measure changes in species' population levels. Although numerous factors other than population density may affect HPUE (e.g., snowfall, road density, harvest regulations, etc.), trends in the HPUE may signify changes to a species' population level. Whereas a decreasing HPUE is taken to signal decreasing population levels, and an increasing HPUE as a sign of increasing population levels (figure 1). In 2009, GFP began collecting, as part of its annual lion hunter survey, the number of days hunted per lion hunter. This information is used in conjunction with the total number of lions harvested to calculate a HPUE value. In 2015, the

HPUE value was 3.17 mountain lions harvested per 1,000 man-days hunted (table 3). This is an 8 percent decrease from the 2014 value of 3.43 mountain lions harvested per 1,000 man-days hunted. Since GFP started collecting data on the number of days lion hunting, the HPUE in 2010 was the highest at 4.39. The 2015 HPUE is a 28 percent decrease from the 2010 value.

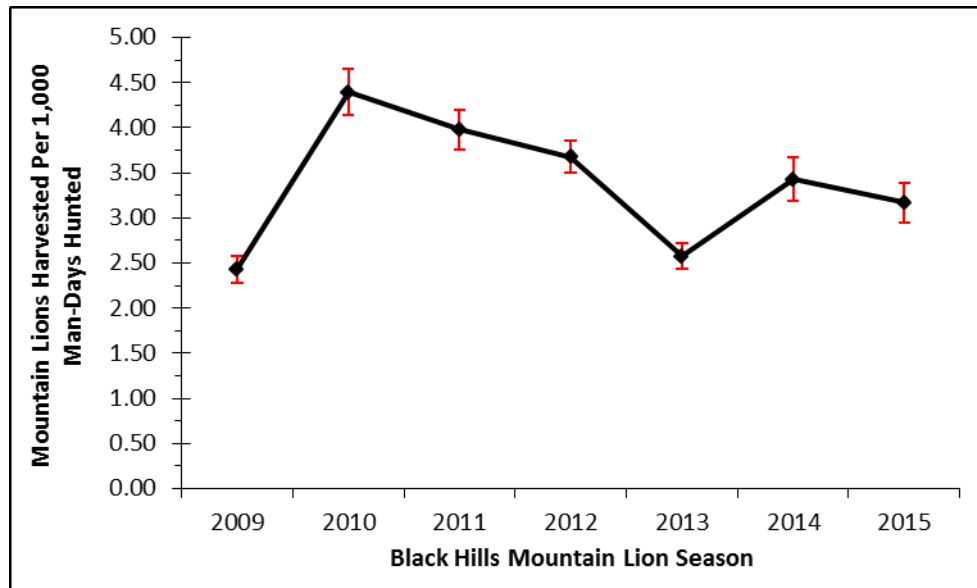


Figure 1: Harvest per unit effort for Black Hills seasons, 2009 to 2015 (excludes CSP)
a. Error bars represent 95% confidence interval

Table 3: Harvest per unit effort for Black Hills seasons, 2009 to 2015 (excludes CSP)

Year	Season Length (Days)	Lions Harvested	Licenses	Active Hunters	Average # Days	Man-Days Hunted	Harvest Per 1,000 Man-Days	% Change from Previous Yr
2009	45	26	2,428	1,646 (1,613, 1,679)	6.5	10,699 (10,053, 11,351)	2.43 (2.29, 2.59)	-
2010	41	40	2,082	1,468 (1,439, 1,496)	6.2	9,102 (8,574, 9,631)	4.39 (4.15, 4.67)	81%
2011	52	47	2,325	1,790 (1,767, 1,813)	6.6	11,814 (11,164, 12,469)	3.98 (3.77, 4.21)	-9%
2012	61	69	3,482	2,646 (2,612, 2,681)	7.1	18,787 (17,883, 19,700)	3.67 (3.50, 3.86)	-8%
2013	96	54	4,351	2,872 (2,803, 2,940)	7.3	20,966 (19,796, 19,700)	2.58 (2.44, 2.73)	-30%
2014	96	44	3,293	1,861 (1,803, 1,919)	6.9	12,841 (11,939, 13,752)	3.43 (3.19, 3.69)	33%
2015	96	38	3,210	1,689 (1,683, 1,695)	7.1	11,992 (11,176, 12,808)	3.17 (2.97, 3.40)	-8%

a. Numbers in parentheses represent 95% confidence intervals

Custer State Park (CSP)

A total of 136 access permits were issued for mountain lion hunting in CSP: 120 permits for boot hunters (4 intervals; 30 per interval) and 16 permits for hunters using dogs (4 intervals; 4 per interval). All 136 hunters who received a CSP access permit were surveyed regarding their hunting experiences inside the state park. A total of 114 access permit holders responded to the survey accounting for 84 percent of the permit holders. The majority of CSP permitted lion hunters (66%) spent some time hunting mountain lions in CSP during the 2015 season (table 4). Based on this reported rate of participation, a total of 90 hunters were estimated to have actively hunted lions in CSP during the 2015 season. Sixty-one percent of boot hunters and 100% of hunters using dogs reported participating in the CSP season, for an estimated total of 73 boot hunters and 16 hunters using dogs. Boot hunters reported spending an average of 3.3 days and hunters using dogs averaged 4.2 days hunting mountain lions in CSP (table 5). Half of active lion hunters hunted 3 days or less during the 2015 season. On average, CSP hunters who were successful in harvesting a mountain lion reported spending 1.8 days hunting lions. Table 6 shows the breakdown of mean days spent hunting lions in CSP by hunting interval.

Five mountain lions were harvested inside CSP during the 2015 season. Success per permitted hunter (includes all hunters with access permits regardless of participation) was 3.7 percent. The estimated hunter success for active CSP lion hunters (includes hunters with dogs) was 5.6 percent (table 7). Hunters using dogs within CSP were more successful than boot hunters. All five lions were harvested by hunters using dogs (31.3% success rate).

Table 4: CSP mountain lion season reported participation by permit period

CSP Lion Season	Hunting Interval								TOTAL
	Dec. 26 Jan 11	Jan 12 Jan 18 ^a	Jan 19 Feb 4	Feb 5 Feb 11 ^a	Feb 12 Feb 28	Mar 1 Mar 7 ^a	Mar 8 Mar 24	Mar 25 Mar 31 ^a	
Participated	16 (67%)	4 (100%)	19 (73%)	4 (100%)	15 (60%)	3 (100%)	10 (42%)	4 (100%)	75 (66%)
Did Not Participate	8 (33%)	—	7 (27%)	—	10 (40%)	—	14 (58%)	—	39 (34%)

a. Hunting with dogs allowed

Table 5: Reported number of days lion hunted in CSP

2015 Custer State Park Season				
Days	Active Hunters	Percent		
1	12	16.0		
2	21	28.0		
3	13	17.3		
4	8	10.7		
5	7	9.3		
6	6	8.0		
7	6	8.0		
8	—	—		
9	—	—		
10	2	2.7		
Total	75	100.0		
	Hunters	Mean	SE	95% CI
Active lion hunters	75	3.4	0.247	(3.0, 3.9)
Did not harvest a lion	71	3.5	0.255	(3.0, 4.0)
Harvested a lion	4	1.8	0.479	(0.8, 2.7)
Boot hunters	60	3.3	0.274	(2.7, 3.8)
Hunters using dogs	15	4.2	0.545	(3.1, 5.3)

Table 6: Reported mean days hunted by permit period, 2015 CSP season

Mean Days Hunted, 2015 CSP Lion Season								
	Dec. 26 Jan 11	Jan 12 Jan 18 ^a	Jan 19 Feb 4	Feb 5 Feb 11 ^a	Feb 12 Feb 27	Mar 1 Mar 7 ^a	Mar 8 Mar 24	Mar 25 Mar 31 ^a
N	16	4	19	4	16	3	10	4
MEAN	3.75	4.25	3.74	4.25	2.00	3.33	3.20	4.75
SE	0.581	1.377	0.396	0.750	0.316	1.856	0.964	0.854
95% CI	(2.6, 4.9)	(1.6, 6.9)	(3.0, 4.5)	(2.8, 5.7)	(1.4, 2.6)	(1.0, 7.0)	(1.3, 5.1)	(3.1, 6.4)

a. Hunting with dogs allowed

Table 7: Hunter success statistics for 2015 CSP mountain lion season

2015 Custer State Park Success Statistics	
Per permitted hunter	(5/136)*100 = 3.7%
Estimated number of active permitted hunters	136*0.658 = 90
Estimated success per active permitted hunter	(5/90)*100 = 5.6%
Estimated number of boot hunters	120*0.606 = 73
Estimated success per active boot hunter	(0/73)*100 = 0.0%
Estimated number of active hunters using dogs	16*1.00 = 16
Estimated success per active hunter using dogs	(5/16)*100 = 31.3%

Satisfaction & Preferences

All licensed mountain lion hunters were asked to indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the 2015 Black Hills mountain lion season. In addition, all lion hunters holding a CSP access permit were asked their level of satisfaction with the structure of the CSP 2015 season. Respondents' satisfaction was measured using a seven-point Likert scale.²

Approximately 12 percent of all licensed lion hunters indicated they were dissatisfied with the 2015 Black Hills mountain lion season; 51 percent were neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, and 37 percent were satisfied with it (figure 2). Overall, hunters who successfully harvested a mountain lion (excluding CSP) were more satisfied with the season than Black Hills lion hunters who did not harvest a lion. Only 3 percent of successful Black Hills hunters indicated they were dissatisfied with the season and 94 percent said they were satisfied with it overall. On average, all licensed hunters indicated they were slightly satisfied and successful hunters were very satisfied (table 8).

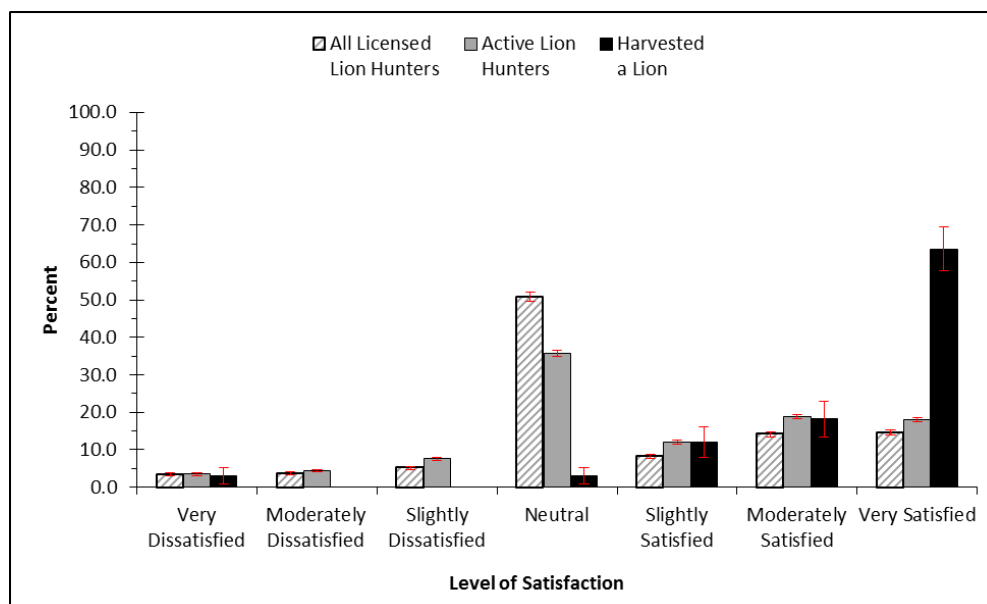


Figure 2: Hunter satisfaction with the 2015 Black Hills lion season

a. error bars represent 95% confidence interval

² Scale: 1 Very Dissatisfied; 2 Moderately Dissatisfied; 3 Slightly Dissatisfied; 4 Neutral; 5 Slightly Satisfied; 6 Moderately Satisfied; 7 Very Satisfied

Table 8: Hunter mean satisfaction with 2015 Black Hills lion season

2015 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season			
	All Licensed Lion Hunters	Active Lion Hunters	Harvested a Lion
Mean¹	4.58	4.77	6.3
SE	0.031	0.046	0.220
95% CI	(4.5, 4.6)	(4.7, 4.9)	(5.9, 6.7)
N	2,174	1,177	33

¹ Scale: 1 Very Dissatisfied; 2 Moderately Dissatisfied; 3 Slightly Dissatisfied; 4 Neutral; 5 Slightly Satisfied; 6 Moderately Satisfied; 7 Very Satisfied

Forty-six percent of hunters with a CSP access permit were satisfied with the structure of the 2015 CSP mountain lion season; 32 percent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 22 percent were dissatisfied (table 9). All successful CSP hunters indicated they were satisfied with the season in 2015. On average boot hunters tended to be more neutral in their satisfaction level compared to hunters using hounds.

Table 9: Hunter satisfaction with 2015 CSP lion season

2015 Custer State Park Hunter Satisfaction					
	All CSP Access Permit Holders	Active CSP Hunters	Harvested a Lion	Boot Hunters	Hunters using Dogs
Very Dissatisfied	6.4	8.1	—	5.3	13.3
Moderately Dissatisfied	7.3	4.1	—	7.4	6.7
Slightly Dissatisfied	8.2	9.5	—	8.4	6.7
Neutral	31.8	20.3	—	35.8	6.7
Slightly Satisfied	10.9	13.5	—	11.6	6.7
Moderately Satisfied	15.5	21.6	25.0	14.7	20.0
Very Satisfied	20.0	23.0	75.0	16.8	40.0
Mean	4.6	4.84	6.75	4.53	5.07
SE	0.169	0.214	0.25	0.172	0.589
95% CI	(4.3, 4.9)	(4.4, 5.3)	(6.3, 7.2)	(4.2, 4.9)	(3.9, 6.2)

Finally, all licensed mountain lion hunters were asked to indicate the direction they would prefer to see the mountain lion population in South Dakota go over the next five years. Hunters' preferences were measured using a five-point scale.³ In addition, hunters were provided the opportunity to indicate they were unsure, if applicable. On average, South Dakota mountain lion hunters want to see the mountain lion population decrease a little over the next five years (figure 3). Forty-seven percent of licensed lion hunters would like to see the population decrease, 32 percent want the population to stay about the same, and 15 percent want to see it increase. Six percent of licensed lion hunters indicated they were not sure.

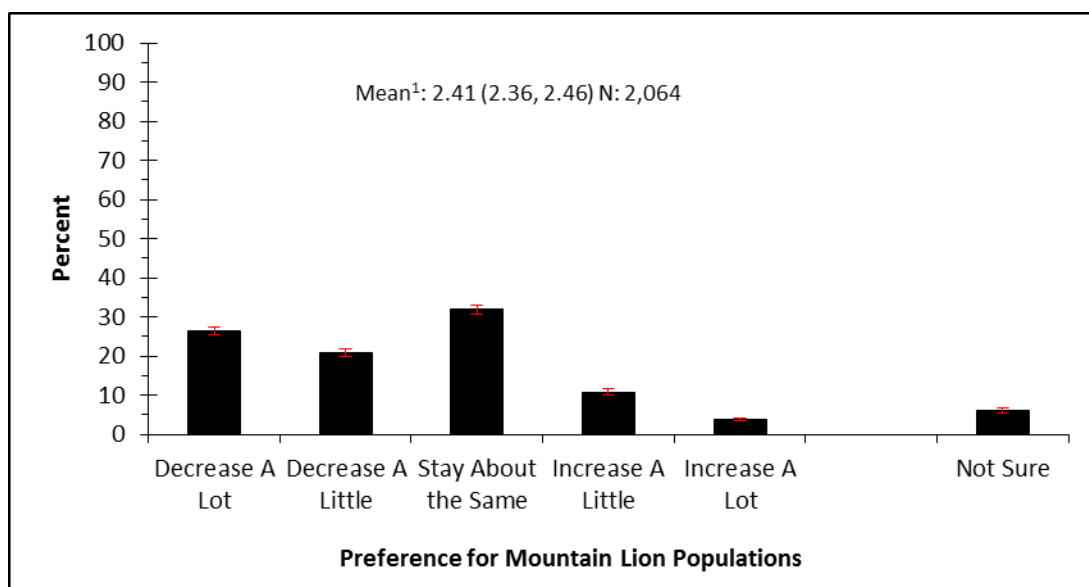


Figure 3: Mountain lion hunters' preferences for lion populations

¹ Scale: 1 Decrease a lot; 2 Decrease a little; 3 Stay about the same; 4 Increase a little; and 5 Increase a lot; (95% Confidence Interval); Not sure responses excluded from mean calculation

2. Error bars represent 95% confidence interval

³ Scale: 1 Decrease a lot; 2 Decrease a little; 3 Stay about the same; 4 Increase a little; and 5 Increase a lot

Trend Data

South Dakota has had an annual mountain lion season in the Black Hills since 2005. As part of the evaluation of this hunting season, hunter surveys have been administered to all licensed mountain lion hunters at the close of each season. There was no mountain lion season during 2008; therefore survey data is available for 10 of the last 11 years. Many of the questions have remained consistent across all 10 years, while others have been included occasionally across the years. The following figures illustrate trends seen in hunters' participation, success, overall satisfaction, and population preferences for mountain lions in South Dakota.

The majority of licensed mountain lion hunters have participated in lion hunting during each of the Black Hills mountain lion seasons, ranging from a low of 53 percent to a high of 77 percent (figure 4). The rate of participation in the Black Hills mountain lion season reached its lowest in 2015. License sales in 2015 were similar to those in 2014, however, sales in recent years have been down from the 2013 high of 4,351 licenses. The lower participation coupled with the relatively high license sales may be explained to some extent by hunters purchasing licenses for use in the year-round season outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District.

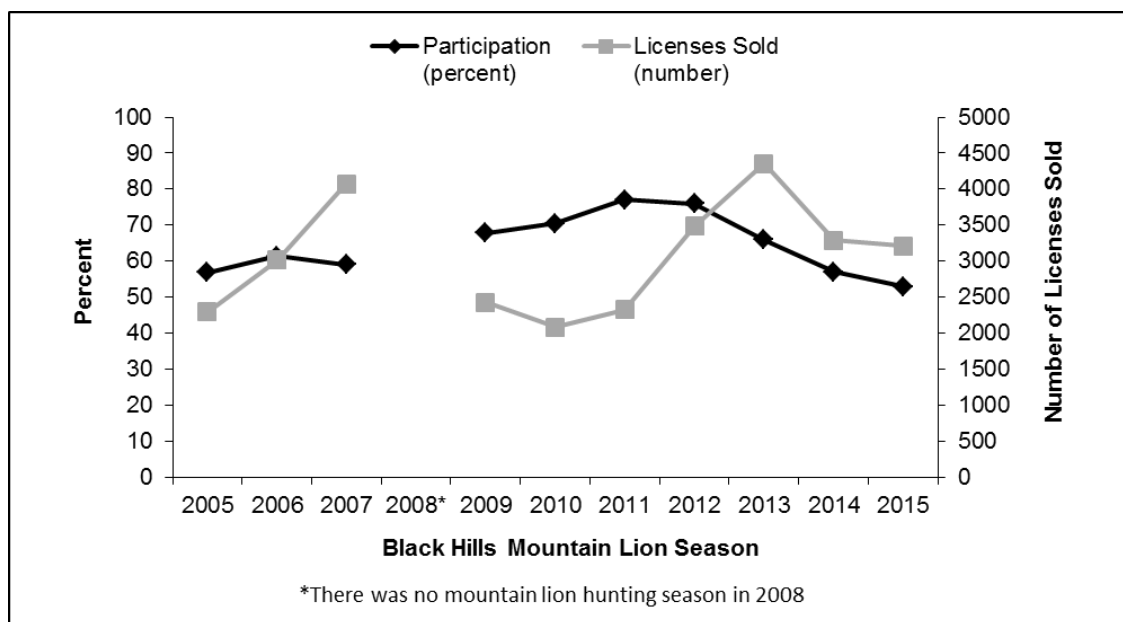


Figure 4: Black Hills mountain lion season participation and license sales, 2005-2015

Starting in 2009 survey data was collected on the number of days hunters spent hunting mountain lions during the Black Hills season. The average number of days has remained relatively consistent ranging from 6.2 to 7.3 days (figure 5). Hunters who successfully harvested a mountain lion have consistently spent more days hunting lions during the season than unsuccessful hunters.

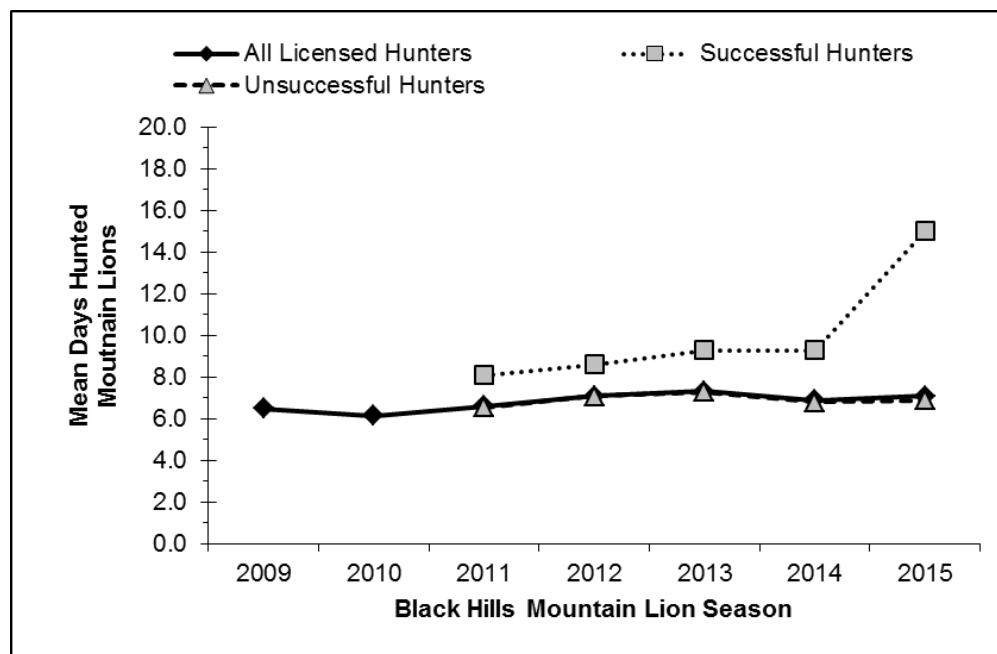


Figure 5: Mean number of days spent hunting mountain lions during Black Hills season, 2009-2015

On average, hunters' overall satisfaction with the Black Hills mountain lion season has remained fairly consistent over the past 11 years (figure 6). The average satisfaction level for all licensed hunters has been slightly satisfied. Hunters who were successful in harvesting a mountain lion have consistently been more satisfied than unsuccessful hunters, with satisfaction ranging from moderately to very satisfied.

Starting in 2013, all lion hunters were asked to indicate their preference for the direction South Dakota's mountain lion population goes over the next five years (figure 7). Over the past three years the percentage of lion hunters who want to see the mountain lion population in

South Dakota decrease has dropped from 64% in 2013 to 47% in 2015. While the percentage of hunters wanting the population to stay about the same has grown from 23% in 2013 to 32% in 2015, and hunters wanting to see the population increase has gone from 9% in 2013 to 15% in 2015.

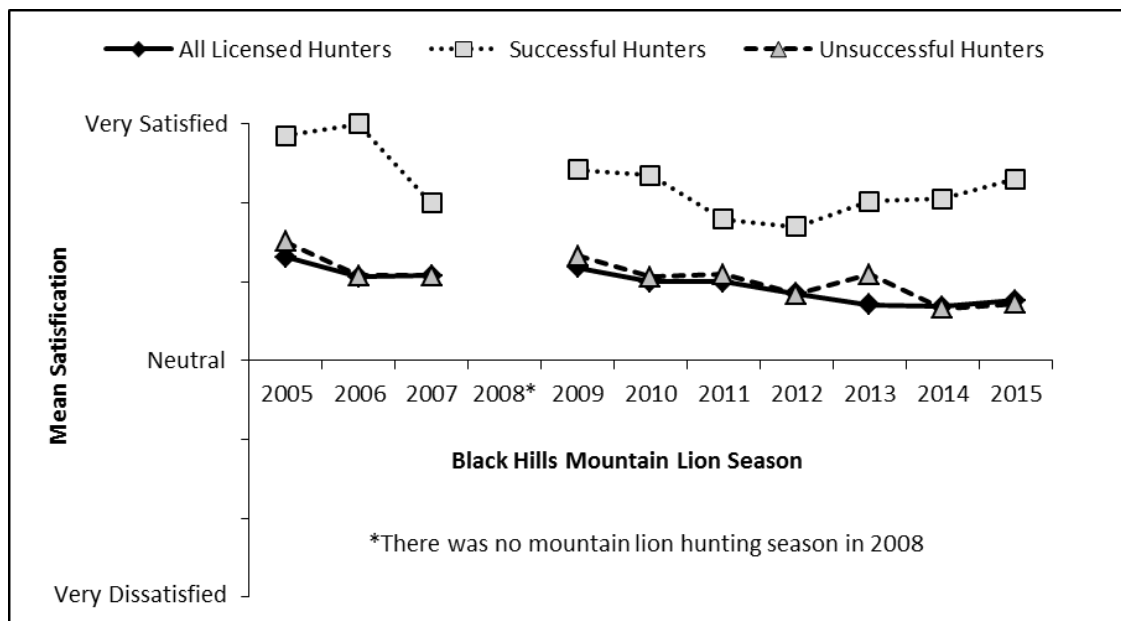


Figure 6: Hunter satisfaction with the Black Hills mountain lion season, 2005-2015

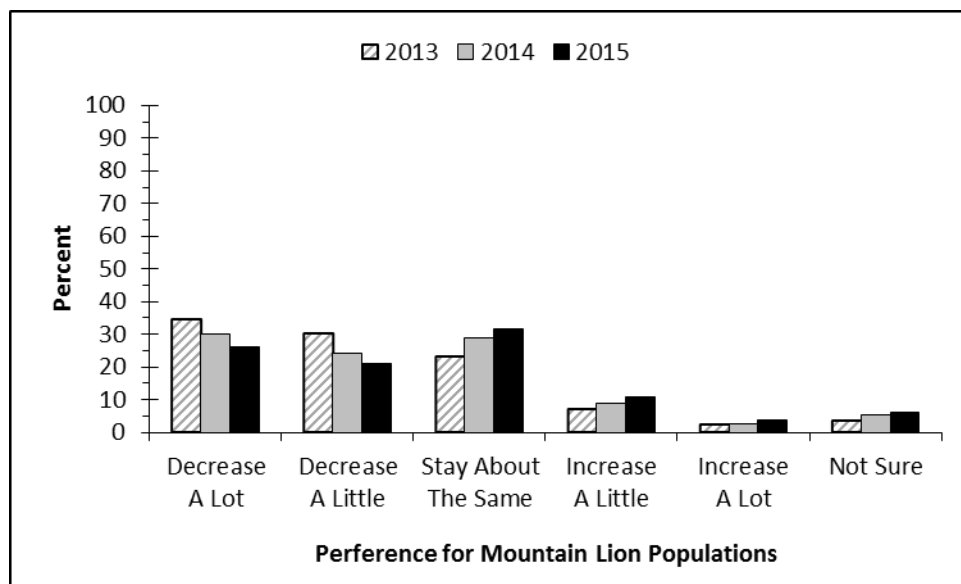


Figure 7: Mountain lion hunters' preference for mountain lion populations over the next five years

Comments

Many of the respondents to the Black Hills mountain lion hunter survey provided additional comments with their completed questionnaire (appendix B). These comments provide a qualitative description of hunters' opinions related to mountain lion management and concerns. These comments did not have to be specific to any question asked on the survey, but rather hunters were free to provide additional comments at the end. Comments are included in appendix B.

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APPENDICES

Dear Hunter:

Please consider completing this survey online at:

gfp.sd.gov/surveys

Our records indicate you purchased a South Dakota mountain lion hunting license for 2015. The 2015 season within the Black Hills Fire Protection District closed March 31st. The purpose of this survey is to collect information about your hunting experiences and general opinions about mountain lion management in South Dakota. This information is collected every year as an evaluation of the mountain lion season from the hunters' perspectives, and is important in making future decisions about the Black Hills mountain lion season.

PLEASE RESPOND at your earliest convenience. Our goal is to receive a response from each survey recipient. We will provide follow up mailings to those who don't respond so returning this survey now will save you from repeat mailings of this same card. Thanks to you, we believe we have one of the most accurate harvest surveys in the nation.

Thank you for being a part of wildlife management in South Dakota.

Sincerely, Cynthia Longmire, Human Dimensions Specialist

Survey ID:

2015 BLACK HILLS MOUNTAIN LION SURVEY

This survey only pertains to the 2015 lion hunting season within the Black Hills Fire Protection District (December 26 to March 31), excluding Custer State Park.

1. Did you hunt the 2015 South Dakota Black Hills mountain lion season, excluding Custer State Park (December 26 to March 31, 2015)?
☐ NO – Skip to Q4
☐ YES
2. How many days did you hunt lions in the Black Hills during the 2015 season: _____ days
3. Did you harvest a mountain lion in the Black Hills during the 2015 lion season?
☐ NO
☐ YES
4. Overall, how satisfied/dissatisfied were you with the Black Hills mountain lion season as conducted in 2015? Please circle one:

Very Dissatisfied										Very Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				
5. Over the next 5 years, would you prefer to see the mountain lion population in South Dakota... Please circle one:

Decrease A Lot	Decrease A Little	Stay About the Same	Increase A Little	Increase A Lot	Not Sure
1	2	3	4	5	6



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Pierre, South Dakota 57501-3182



[DATE]

Dear mountain lion hunter:

Our records indicate you purchased a South Dakota mountain lion hunting license for 2015, and received a Custer State Park mountain lion hunting access permit. The 2015 season within the Black Hills Fire Protection District and Custer State Park closed March 31st. The purpose of this survey is to collect information about your hunting experiences and general opinions about mountain lion management in South Dakota. This information is collected every year as an evaluation of the mountain lion season from the hunters' perspectives. The information you provide is important in making future decisions about the Black Hills mountain lion season.

Please take a few minutes to answer this short survey and return it using the pre-paid envelope provided. Your prompt response will eliminate the need to send you another survey. The ID number on your survey is used to identify hunters who have responded so we can check your name off the mailing list when you return your survey.

This survey only pertains to the 2015 Black Hills Mountain Lion Season (December 26 to March 31). Please answer your survey even if you did not hunt during this season.

Thank you for your participation!

Cynthia L. Longmire
SD Game, Fish, & Parks
Human Dimensions Specialist

2015 Black Hills and Custer State Park Mountain Lion Hunter Survey

This survey only pertains to the 2015 lion hunting season within the Black Hills Fire Protection District and Custer State Park (December 26 to March 31).

Q1a. Did you spend any time hunting for mountain lions within the Black Hills Fire Protection District, *excluding* Custer State Park, during the 2015 Black Hills lion season?

☐ Yes, how many days did you hunt for mountain lions? _____ Days

☐ No ➡ **If NO, please skip to Q2a.**

Q1b. Did you harvest a mountain lion in the Black Hills, not including Custer State Park, during the 2015 lion season?

☐ No

☐ Yes

Q2a. Did you spend any time hunting for mountain lions in Custer State Park during the 2015 season?

☐ Yes, how many days did you hunt for mountain lions? _____ Days

☐ No ➡ **If NO, please skip to Q3.**

Q2b. Did you use hounds while hunting mountain lions in Custer State Park during the 2015 lion season?

☐ No

☐ Yes

Q2c. Did you harvest a mountain lion in Custer State Park during the 2015 lion season?

☐ No

☐ Yes

Q3. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the Black Hills mountain lion season, *excluding* Custer State Park, as conducted in 2015?
Please circle only one response.

<u>Very Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Moderately Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Slightly Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Slightly Satisfied</u>	<u>Moderately Satisfied</u>	<u>Very Satisfied</u>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q4. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the structure of the Custer State Park mountain lion season as conducted in 2015? *Please circle only one response.*

<u>Very Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Moderately Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Slightly Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Slightly Satisfied</u>	<u>Moderately Satisfied</u>	<u>Very Satisfied</u>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q5. Over the next five years, would you prefer to see the mountain lion population in South Dakota: *Please circle only one.*

<u>Decrease A Lot</u>	<u>Decrease A Little</u>	<u>Stay About The Same</u>	<u>Increase A Little</u>	<u>Increase A Lot</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
1	2	3	4	5	6

Thank You!

Thank you very much for your valuable time completing this survey.

If you have comments you would like to share with us, please use the space below. These comments will be put into a report and given to the Game, Fish, & Parks Commissioners, wildlife managers and administrators, and made available to the public. **Electronic comments may also be sent to SDGFPINFO@state.sd.us.**

The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish, and Parks reserves the right, but not the obligation, to remove at its discretion any language which discloses personally identifiable information about yourself or any other individual, as well as language which is obscene, profane, offensive, malicious, discriminatory, defamatory or otherwise unlawful.

Appendix B

Additional Comments

The views expressed in survey comments are the views of the commenting respondent(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks or the author(s) of this report. Neither the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks nor the author(s) guarantee the accuracy, completeness, or reliability of any opinion or view expressed in respondents' comments. The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks reserves the right, but not obligation, to remove at its discretion any language which discloses personally identifiable information about respondents or any other individual, as well as language which is obscene, profane, offensive, malicious, discriminatory, defamatory or otherwise unlawful.

* Note – Respondents' comments did not have to be specific to any question asked on the survey but rather they were free to provide additional comments at the end. Text which appears inside brackets [] has been added to clarify respondents' reference to specific survey questions, identify parts of comments which were illegible, or in some cases to indicate where personally identifying information or expletives has been omitted.

- 107 Too many winter road closures
- 108 There are still plenty of cats in the Hills but global warming kicked my butt this year. Every time I had time to hunt, the snow was gone.
- 110 Just not enough snow
- 111 I hunted hard for 7 days with no snow and 60 - 70 degree temps. It would be nice to have a longer season in the park so that you can make it work to go when the weather is right for hunting.
- 114 Successful lion hunters in CSP should not be allowed another lion permit in the park for five years.
- 118 Hunted in warm weather, no snow
- 119 We did not have any snow fall to help us hunt this year.
- 121 I do not want to see dogs used in the Black Hills Fire District. That would keep many hunters, like me from hunting. I and many other hunters cannot pay the price of dog hunting for lions in the Black Hills. Thank you.
- 123 Hunt with hounds increased
- 125 I had two opportunities to kill a lion but both went outside the park boundaries, just my luck. Any opportunity to hunt inside Custer State Park is awesome. There are a lot of houndsmen very willing to help with this hunt. Without snow this is a very difficult hunt
- 126 It was a tough season for the lack of snow in the central/southern hills. Found tracks every time I did make it out, just was unable to capitalize.
- 130 There was very little snow in the hills this year which makes hunting lions way more difficult. At least if you have snow you can narrow your search quite a bit and it isn't such a shot in the dark.

- 131 if you want to fill quota just allow the use of dogs cause there is only limited time the weather cooperates to be able to hunt effectively most years
- 133 Please extend the Lion hunting season dates through April 30th. April can produce favorable snow conditions. The last few years, we've seen very little favorable snow conditions in January, February, and March. Please keep the Black Hills Fire Protection District closed to dog hunters. Boot hunting in the Black Hills, under the right conditions, is the ultimate big game hunt in the USA. Please make changes in the regulations to allow hunting Mt. Lions with the use of artificial light, in the event you are trailing a wounded animal into a cave, crevasse, or other naturally occurring condition in which the amount of ambient daylight prevents the safe tracking, harvest, and retrieval of a wounded mountain lion. The current 30 minute before sunrise and after sunset would still apply. There are times when hunters may need an artificial light source to illuminate a cave when tracking a wounded mountain lion. Current regulations don't allow such use of artificial light.
- 134 Open the entire Black Hills for dogs, at least for the last month. When hunting cats I ran into 6 different trucks that were "bobcat" hunting with dogs. You need to open the month of March at least with dogs. I am a landowner and would gladly allow dog hunting on my ranch.
- 135 Harvested a male 94 pound mountain lion, however the weight listed on the web (harvest result web site) showed 84 pounds. If you are using this information to determine the overall health of lions, incorrectly adding information will distort your results.
- 136 This season had terrible weather for tracking lions. Calling lions in is a 1 in 100 chance
- 137 I recommend setting up units in the Black Hills with each unit having its own quota. Some units should be allowed to use dogs along the Wyoming boarder where there is no private ground.
- 138 I support the use of hounds in Custer State Park, as a separate access permit, as long as a 'non hound permit' is also available in a separate time frame (as it is now). I would not support the use of hounds outside CSP (Black Hills Fire Protection District). I enjoy the challenge of hunting this magnificent animal even though I haven't harvested one yet! My vote is to leave everything like it was for the 2015 season!
- 144 Need bonus points for the CSP hound hunts and a waiting period for successful applicants. Would not like to see a true preference point system instituted.
- 145 Overall the current lion hunting setup is about right.
- 148 There just wasn't enough snow this year. My dissatisfaction with the season has nothing to do with wildlife management.
- 151 Hunting was limited due to average temperatures 60-70 degrees. No snow. Thank you for the chance of lion hunt in Custer State Park.
- 152 We need to be able to use dogs everywhere!!!
- 153 I applied for tag to use dogs in Custer state park. Instead I was issued a regular access permit. I heard from other people with the same problem.
- 154 Need to be able to use the logging trails in the park. We do not need mountain lions in the state.

- 156 after drawing a Custer State Park permit for the last half of February I got lucky and shot my cat on January 2 so I called Pierre right away to see if you could draw another name out of the hat so someone else could have the chance to hunt CSP they said they do not redraw for that. so let us who get lucky and shoot a cat purchase another tag it would be more money in the gfp pocket it would not take the hunter out of the hunt either in CSP or the rest of the season for we are not reaching the limits now why not put more guns in the woods if they are willing to pursue the cats also I got fat this year sitting in the house with nothing to do
- 159 it was a great time hunting in the Custer State Park what a privilege and an opportunity to see the park thanks again for the opportunity
- 160 Please allow for year round hunting of mountain lions in the Black Hills Fire protection district. The population needs to be further reduced to allow for less pressure on other big game animals.
- 161 Finding tracks, even in the modest snow falls seen this winter, were far and few. I believe that we have hit the cats pretty hard and I am not sure if I will even purchase a tag next season.
- 173 I would like to see hounds for full season Custer state park and black hills. Limited number of tags such as 10 for a 2 week period in Custer but open hunting in black hills similar to what the state did this year.
- 174 Lack of snow for tracking cougars was an issue during this past season
- 197 I didn't get a lion, but saw a ton of sign. Hunting isn't always about the kill. The week or so I spent hunting was one of the most incredible and unique things I've ever done. There's a great community in the hills and the game commission is doing a great job!
- 200 Limit lion tags to a max of 50. Fewer cats are in the hills.
- 205 Hound use in CSP was great, should increase opportunities for people to use them as far as weeks, 4 people per week was good. Would also like to see hound use the Black Hills get going. Great game warden in CSP.
- 208 This was an extremely tough year to hunt without the aid of either hounds or some form of call. The absence of fresh snow cover made it very unlikely to come across a lion. The other problem with a lack of snow is identification of cubs with their mother. However, just the time spent out in the woods and especially in Custer State Park makes the day worthwhile!
- 211 As of 3/27 only 43 lions and 22 females. I believe that the coyotes are far more of a problem than the lions are. After 8 days of hard hunting at least 6 to 8 hours daily we actually only saw 1 lion. This was outside of Custer State Park.
- 218 Didn't Snow
- 222 Not very good for hunting because of the lack of snow
- 227 I enjoyed hunting lions! however there was just little information given on how to hunt them or places to look for them. I think if there was more information available for new hunters to learn how to hunt lions it would make it more successful and enjoyable.
- 229 I am not in favor of hunting Mountain Lions with hounds.

- 232 First time hunting lions. Came out two times. Had no dogs and love the hunt .Plan on coming out in fall again.
- 999 There has been a lot of talk about use of dogs outside of CSP in the Black Hills. I, for one, am totally against the use of dogs in the Black Hills. It not only gives a hunter an unfair advantage in harvesting a cougar, but also can be frustrating to hunters without dogs while they are tracking. That said, I am also against hunting cats with the use of an ATV or snowmobile. I am aware that there are laws in place against off road vehicles, but I hope that it stays that way.
- 1020 It's nice to see small game, deer, and elk numbers returning.
- 1026 I continue to see mountain lions each hunting season and in the last two years, we have had deer killed by lions across the street from our house in Countryside, and our kids had a lion killed deer left in their front yard. They live amongst us and I feel it necessary to manage their numbers so that their next prey is not a toddler.
- 1030 I think you guys are doing a great job. This season helps a lot of depressed people through the winter. I did not shoot a cat but I got on dozens of very fresh tracks.
- 1032 the biologist [name removed], his help checking in my lion was outstanding he made the check in procedure quick and easy thanks
- 1037 Open Lion hunting during Black Hills deer hunting.
- 1054 It's time to start using dogs to get to the quota!!
- 1056 Although I do agree with the way GFP is handling the mountain lion hunting in Custer State Park, I personally do not want to see it go any further than that. Even the areas outside the Black Hills. If someone has a lion problem urgent enough to require dogs, let GFP take care of it, with dogs if necessary.
- 1061 Lions are destroying the elk and deer herds. Our county 2013 5000 head 2014 5400, where are the calves lion killed. Lions 240 for 4 years is there no reproduction? Inform the public of how many animals are killed each year by lions maybe it would wake some people up of the destruction of our animals.
- 1073 I hope that we always have a huntable population of mountain lions in the Black Hills.
- 1095 It would certainly be nice to have the ability to use dogs for the hunt
- 1106 Allow the use of any caliber weapon. Have season open year round. Lower cost of tag, allow live decoys. Make tag good for entire state.
- 1107 Conditions for hunting were extremely poor this year.
- 1108 I don't have many comments this year because I didn't have a chance to go hunt lions this time around. I will try again in the future. Thank you for letting us have a season on cats.
- 1113 It would be really nice if they opened it to hounds in the black hills too, I am very thankful and would like to thank the game and fish for allowing hounds on the prairie and in Custer State Park. Even if they opened it to hounds for a couple weeks at the end of the season after the foot guys had a couple weeks. This would give a chance to older people who can't track one down.

- 1127 Mountain lion hunting is getting more difficult the past couple of years. I truly believe the population is in check as they are more difficult to find than 10 years ago. We did see increased numbers of elk, deer, and turkeys this year as compared to the past also. This would also indicate less depredation. I vote to keep the use of dogs out of the Black Hills. For the hunters that get out of their trucks or off their 4 wheelers and actually hunt, a fine trophy can still be had.
- 1129 Do not allow dogs.
- 1130 I purchase a tag just in case I get the urge to go hunting for them. I don't hunt them hard because I am not sure what I would do with one if I did shoot it. I have eaten them before and I am not a fan of their taste. They are expensive to get mounted too. I am glad when they are harvested as they have been extremely hard on elk, deer, and turkey populations.
- 1133 I did not get a chance to hunt
- 1140 I would like them to allow trapping mountain lions as well as running dogs on public land.
- 1148 Lack of snow January, February and March was reason I lost interest.
- 1154 Using hounds would make a more productive season, one could size, sex and make a very ethical shot if it was decided that the lion should be harvested. SDGF&P could harvest near the proper number of lions it felt was correct for the particular season. It would be worth a try! Thanks
- 1168 I would like to see the quota be higher.
- 1169 I liked it better when the mountain lion season overlapped with deer season. If I drew a deer tag I could hunt both tags with one trip across the state.
- 1172 I would like to see the rule about trapping Mtn. Lions change. I feel if a trapper catches a lion and has a lion tag they should be able to harvest the cat. They are a predator just like bobcats and should be allowed to be harvested by trappers. I would rather see this then have dogs allowed to hunt lions. There is more of a sport/challenge with trapping than letting dogs do all the work.
- 1177 Consider starting the season a little earlier in the winter to take advantage of snow conditions. Seems to be very little tracking snow the last half of the season.
- 1180 Hunting was very difficult due the lack of snow.
- 1183 need to hunt with dogs
- 1185 do not allow dogs outside the park or I will never apply again
- 1186 Let's use dogs the month of March!
- 1187 If we want our deer and elk numbers back we need to get serious about our predators, mountain lions, coyotes. We need to stop listening to the 1%ers and listen to the sportsmen that pay the way. I don't want to see this state start needing to get funding from the general fund like is happening in many other states that are listening to those few people.
- 1188 poor hunting conditions
- 1196 not much time to hunt this year, but plenty of sign when we were out

- 1208 I know the quota has been down the last 2 yrs but it is because the weather has not been conducive to tracking them. There are still too many lions. Deer and turkey numbers have dramatically decreased. Keep the quota as is. Thank you
- 1229 Open up a season for dogs so the quota can be filled and open it in Nov or Oct so one can shoot one if he sees it hunting deer or elk
- 1231 Finally we are seeing big game again.
- 1232 I think the game fish and parks does a great job managing mountain lions and I think there should be no major changes to the hunting season. I don't think dogs should be allowed outside of Custer State Park to keep it fair for everyone.
- 1233 Our ranches are located just west of Buffalo Gap, SD and five miles to the northwest, there are almost no deer and elk left in the Beaver Creek valley. There needs to be a greater reduction in predators around here.
- 1235 a few mtn lions would be ok but I see no real need for them. A bounty is the real way to get rid of most of them but that won't happen so continuing the season is good. SD Game and Fish needs to not listen to the loud minority and listen to the majority, the ones who do not want lions as they have our hills deer and elk pops very low and damn it quit selling elk cow tags
- 1238 I don't feel it appropriate to make hunters who only want the Custer State Park dog permit to have to buy the Mtn. Lion license first. I'd be willing to pay a little more once I got the dog permit, than to pay the license fee up front to even apply.
- 1247 did not see any lions, but had a great time hunting for them. It's all about the hunt, not the kill, for me.
- 1248 use dogs
- 1251 It is too bad the goal of this season is to eradicate Mtn. Lions from SD. By profession I am a Wildlife Biologist so I know a hunt designed to "get rid of something". I know people are against the dog hunting but at least with hounds one can selective harvest the toms. I am afraid that sooner or later the State will end up in court with some animal group trying to stop the hunting altogether then it is always harder to start a season once it has been closed. The State has a very hard issue to deal with when it concerns Mtn. Lions in SD.
- 1259 I wasn't able to hunt as much as I normally have done in the past. The low snow cover and warm weather created bad hunting conditions in the central hills. I would like to see the season open earlier so some of the western hills could be hunted before the roads are closed to the snowmobiles. The quota could be dropped because the numbers are down from a few years ago. I think the population has stabilized.
- 1264 Would like to see mtn lions hunted with the use of dogs throughout the entire hills
- 1270 No snow made it hard hunting and not being able to use dogs in the hills. Lion hunting is a lot of luck, time, and a lot of expenses.
- 1273 I live in Sturgis. I tried to access Deadman road, SW corner of Sturgis, but there apparently private land posted not to trespass. I can see the gate access to the NF less than 100 yards. Is there an easement to this road. There is a road but with sigs up.
- 1277 I would like to see the season start earlier in Dec.

- 1284 Purchased license because of lion tracks by my house along the Sioux River. Renner, SD
- 1285 Hunted between Hill City and Deerfield. Cut several sets of tracks, found two kills. Great lion season.
- 1297 Kill as many lions as we can to bring back our deer and elk
- 1302 I keep the license for private farm use and get to the hills if time works
- 1307 I think they should allow more dog use as it would give the non-locals a better chance because they wouldn't have to rely on the weather so much Trying to find and follow fresh tracks
- 1309 makes hunting difficult when snowmobiles are everywhere
- 1320 if it doesn't snow we need to be able to use dogs
- 1324 Please consider extending the mountain lion season into the fall so that the deer and elk hunters have the opportunity to harvest a lion if they should see one. The cost for a mountain lion tag is excessive when you consider that the odds of harvesting a lion are extremely small. Extending the season to the fall for the deer and elk hunters would help justify the excessive cost of the tag. Also, it will likely increase the sales revenue for the GF&P, as many of these elk and deer hunters may purchase a lion license. And finally, I believe that many more lions should be harvested, as it is my opinion that almost everyone in the public who enjoys the outdoors, will benefit from having increased deer and elk numbers (versus increased lion numbers), which means harvesting more lions. Thank you for allowing me to share my opinion.
- 1333 no snow
- 1340 The email for the survey was in my junk mail for some reason. I purchase the license in case I run across a lion while hunting outside the BHFPD. We have had several sightings in my area and tracks inside town within a block of my home.
- 1344 It is very hard for us people East River to get one, without dogs. As everyone knows, we need fresh snow to even get a chance at getting one. There is no way to plan some time off and coincide with fresh snow. I now only buy one for a slim chance of getting a chance at one in my area.
- 1346 my experience hunting mountain lions this year was limited I think because of lack of snow. Even though I didn't harvest a lion, my time in the woods was relaxing and enjoyed every minute of it. For that reason, I want to put my 2 cents in about hunting with dogs in the future. Please don't allow the use of dogs in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Fair chase and tracking of the cat is sufficient I feel. If you don't want to put the time and energy of hunting mountain lions without dogs, you shouldn't be in the woods enjoying your experience.
- 1355 Not enough snow or I would have hunted more in southern hills. Seen more double and triple sets of tracks. Only 2 lions that where by themselves in the seven days I hunted
- 1357 I buy a tag every year to support the season. I was not able to get out this year due to a very busy schedule but I like that we have the opportunity to hunt them if we choose to. I believe in balance and feel that we have brought the BH lion population down to a reasonable level for their own good and that of their prey. Just my opinion and hardly scientific.... :)

- 1358 We need to allow the use of hounds to focus take on trophy males and enhance the ability to meet harvest goals even if there is a limited tag quota for hound take Black Hills-wide. OTC non-hound tags could still generate revenue and give opportunity.
- 1364 due to work I was not able to hunt as many days as I would have normally
- 1370 did not see a mtn. lion which was disappointing but not seeing any means there are less of them and more deer which I'm ok with
- 1374 Use of hounds in the Black Hills would make lion hunting more appealing.
- 1387 I think the mountain lions in the Black Hills are wrecking our Deer and Elk, Sheep, and Goat hunting. I see no need for Mountain Lions in the Black Hills.
- 1388 I purchased the license to help the state with lion management funds
- 1393 The lack of snow and other weather conditions kept me out of the woods.
- 1395 I was very satisfied with the Lion season and all the regulations. But the U.S. Forest Service kicked me out after 14 days with a 75\$ fine for camping 16 days! This is a problem for me if I ever draw my archery elk tag! I don't feel I should be only allowed to hunt half the season after trying for over 10 years to draw a tag and then be kicked out of my camp and be expected to rent a hotel or drive from home every day. GFP and the Forest service need to get there regulations revised and work together for the good of all hunters and anyone wanting to spend time in the Forest. The forest belongs to all tax payers and we already have too much government.
- 1401 I think the licenses and season should stay about the same for a few years. Unless new data says we need to change something. I don't want to see the population increase and have adverse effects on the other species of big game. I also don't want the mountain lion population so low that they can't be pursued by sportsmen/women.
- 1405 No snow to track.
- 1408 No snow this year made for tough hunting.
- 1417 You guys have failed miserably at managing these cats. What a joke. At least that idiot in charge retired, now if only the rest of you would follow suit.
- 1418 The use of hounds in the black hills is needed.
- 1419 I would rather hunt elk than cats.
- 1421 I did not harvest a Lion this year but was able to find tracks every day I hunted. I feel the population is still too high and is having a negative effect on deer, elk, and small game. Hope to see a similar season next year.
- 1423 Snow conditions on days I was able to hunt this year were terrible. Hopefully we get more snow days in the future.
- 1428 Not much snow otherwise I would have hunted more. Most tracks that I came upon were 2 and up to 4 sets together
- 1431 I hunt Yankton County. Saw a few but no shots yet
- 1443 I live in one of the most cat populated areas in the BH. This year I have only heard about two cats being seen. One about a quarter mile from my house and the other about two-

- three miles away next to the State Park fence. Could be the same cat. Seems like a nice balance to me!
- 1448 Open year around, over the counter tags
- 1452 Thanks for the opportunity to hunt this magnificent animal and thanks for all your help managing and studying this species in an effort to provide SoDak hunters with a unique hunting opportunity.
- 1455 Most of the mountain lion depredation I have found have been whitetail deer out here in the prairie. I follow up on reports of lion attacks on horses annually and several pets have been killed. I appreciate and endorse hunting season, quotas and the study of mountain lion in SD.
- 1457 Best lion season I've had. Encountered a total of 5 cats throughout the season. Most I think we're young sub-adults. I was specifically hunting for a large male. Encountered one, but no time for a good shot. I hope the boot hunting of cats in the hills continues...thanks for the opportunity to experience it.
- 1458 Seems as though deer and elk have come back a little since the third year of the mountain lion season..
- 1465 I wish there was a map that has the same road names and numbers as what is on the road signs to make it easier to navigate.
- 1486 Let's open the hills up to a limited number of permits that can use dogs.
- 1487 would like to see season run from Nov. 1st. to April 1st.
- 1492 People using ATV to look for tracks ruin it for me. I am 63 years old and somewhat weakened by a year of west Nile virus, so if I walk in 3 miles to call lions, I do not like seeing ATV tracks in areas where it is closed for wildlife to not be disturbed. Those who harvest a lion with such tactics should be considered poaching and the lion confiscated for not hunting by legal methods.
- 1505 Please allow dogs in the black hills other than Custer state park.
- 1511 Please do not allow dogs! I enjoy it the way it is even though I have never harvested one!
- 1518 I think the season is being done properly, with harvest totals at good numbers. The fact that you opened the mountain goat and sheep seasons would mean to me that numbers are being controlled. Keep up the good work.
- 1541 I have great respect and admire the Mtn Lion. That is why I travel to several other states to pursue Mtn. Lions with hounds. Over the last 3 years I have hunted with hounds in 3 different states over 40 days and have NOT KILLED a Mtn. Lion. I have passed on multiple cats every year. I choose not to kill any females or young toms. A true houndsman enjoys the hunt and working with his dogs. I would like to see SD allow the use of hounds to hunt Mtn lions in the Black Hills. This would not affect the population as mostly big toms would only be harvested by houndsmen. This method would also teach Mtn lions to fear humans in populated areas. Please consider the use of hounds to hunt Mt Lions in the Black Hills.
- 1543 Impact on elk, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, and deer my greatest concern. Thanks for your work

- 1550 I think it is great that we have the lions, and that we are allowed to hunt them. Thanks for having the courage to stand up and do what's right by allowing hunting of the cats. I would like to see more opportunities for using dogs.
- 1556 Tough to hunt in the southern hills with very little snow cover and limited access to private property.
- 1559 I travel a lot of miles in my work most every day it includes early morning evening and early night I pay attention to the wildlife populations I believe SD GFP is doing a great job there are no suggestions I can make at this time.
- 1563 I could not make it out this year due to a family illness. But next year will apply again. We need to reduce the number even more.
- 1564 open lion season so hunters can use dogs and have a drawing for all tags
- 1568 Whose stupid idea was it to use dogs outside the Black Hills?
- 1569 not about the harvest but having a good time with friends
- 1575 I think along with most people that I know that the lions in our state are not managed properly, the state wants to reduce the number of male cats in the hills but do not allow the use of hounds which is the only effective way to sex a cat and the hound permits that are given in the state park are inadequate and do not require proof of hound ownership which reduces how effectively the tags are used in short I believe the use of hounds should be allowed statewide including black hills national forest
- 1578 Hard to track without snow. It was more to get out into the forest than to hunt. Hunting with Dogs would help!
- 1579 As I stated last year, the only reason I purchased a license is because it's required to apply for a Custer State Park license. If I only plan to hunt Custer State Park when I get a license but am forced to buy one to apply. This is a change that should be made.
- 1581 Not very cooperative weather.
- 1587 Custer State Park should be more accessible during Mountain lion hunting season
- 1596 Applied with hopes of drawing the Custer State Park Dog permit.
- 1599 Use of dogs so the quota would be filled or don't have an end to the season until the quota is full. Why end it March 31 when we haven't filled the quota? There's no point to close the season at that date, just keep it open until the quota is full
- 1605 Dogs will ruin lion hunting.
- 1607 Would love to see the use of dogs statewide in the mountain lion hunt. It would be more effective overall and would help with harvesting just the lions that we want to take out of the system.
- 1622 Keep up the good work. What about the wolves we are seeing? I realize they are protected but are there population estimates?
- 1635 The mountain lion season needs to be moved back to during the deer season
- 1642 My reason for purchasing a Mtn. Lion license was not to hunt in Black Hills Unit, but in case we saw one(again) on my daughter's ranch in Faulk County!

- 1645 allow the use of dogs statewide
- 1649 Due to the lack of snow I did not see any Lions.
- 1661 There are lions in my area and have been viewed multiple times and the deer population is declining like never seen in my life. Lions may go. Thank you for the opportunity to take them!
- 1663 I think that maybe too many female may be kill. You take out 25 a year over 4 years that is a lot of kittens. I love hunting them maybe I just want more so you have a better chance. Thanks
- 1668 I'd like to see the general Black Hills Fire District season open up in November so the deer hunters can carry a mtn. lion tag and have an opportunity to shoot a lion if they see one during their deer hunt. Then come February 1st, open up the lion season to the lion hunters using dogs to help fill the quota.
- 1672 Just do not allow dogs inside the hills unit...we do not need those loud annoying mutts roaming the hills ruining the hunting of those who put in the time and effort of doing it old school because they enjoy the outdoors and what the hills have to offer. Keep it contained to the park or there are many other states they can take their hounds. Just don't ever allow them to run the hills
- 1680 Allow dogs and eliminate them from SD.
- 1687 no dogs
- 1722 Keep the Hills season open until quota met. Deer, elk, sheep and goat population will continue to suffer if you do not remove more lions.
- 1731 I only hunted one day I had to return home for family reasons I have the license more for out of the Black Hills
- 1732 I feel the use of dogs outside Black Hills is a great asset to have available for people with trouble cats.
- 1736 Treat 'em like coyotes in the whole state.
- 1737 I am in Eastern SD, but have seen lions around here, and would harvest one if possible.
- 1756 I would like to see a bounty put on them. Let hunters hunt with dogs in the Hills.
- 1760 The time we missed a female mtn lion was good hunting but the rest of the times I went out there, there was no snow so If you want to reach your number of cats killed every year you need to allow dogs everywhere in the hills to get results.
- 1773 I think deer hunting is a larger revenue generating sector than Mtn Lion season. It might be best to decrease the cats to allow deer to rebound.
- 1774 you will have fewer cats if you kill off 400 head of elk in the black hills
- 1781 Wasn't able to hunt due to health reasons
- 1788 I am not a hound hunter but I would be in favor of allowing hounds in BH lion hunt for the last 30 days of the season or the month of March that gives the non-hound hunters 2 months of good hunting.

- 1796 I actually hunted in the Ft Meade recreation area with archery equipment and ended up missing a mountain lion with my bow, but just seeing one and getting close enough for an archery shot was fantastic. I do feel like the deer numbers have not increased in this area back to normal after the EHD went through in the last few years, so it seems as though the lion numbers are still high.
- 1808 It's pretty hard when you are not allowed dogs. People are basically finding tracks and then using vehicles to try to get ahead of them. Not right!
- 1810 I think it should be the same as shooting a coyote any time of the year east river as long as you purchase a tag. After all the purpose of the season is to prevent them from moving east river.
- 1812 I did not plan hunting cats in the Black Hills. I always buy a tag for cats outside the Black Hills. In the area where I deer hunt there has been an increase in sightings and finding more tracks and winter deer kills.
- 1814 I live in the southern Black Hills. We had very few snow events to allow us to track lions. This is the reason I only spent a couple of days hunting. Hoping for better conditions next year.
- 1818 enjoyed the hunt.
- 1822 keep the use of dogs out of black hills. So a guy doesn't have to spend more money on a guide .
- 1825 season should run longer & during Deer & Elk season
- 1826 more use of dogs to target the right lions to take
- 1839 All I would like to add is that I hope that the GFP can be allowed to do their job like they know how and not have to bow down to administrators who haven't been in the field for a long time or maybe even ever. In other words keep the politicians out of your decision making and start being a little more proactive in your decisions and less reactive.
- 1848 GF&P can't even manage themselves out of a wet paper bag.
- 1856 I hunt statewide
- 1857 Please don't allow hunting with dogs inside the black hills to me it's not much of a sport following a dog around only to shoot a cat in a tree. I do it for the sport..... Something fun about fooling the best
- 1860 I would like to see the use of dogs to pursue Lions throughout the Black Hills Fire Protection District, at least from Hill City west and south because of the lack of overall snow in this general area.
- 1876 If the population of mountain lions is a concern and hunters are having a hard time meeting the quota set by the GF&P, I would suggest providing the option of using dogs outside the park during a specific time frame. Permits for this would be issued through a lottery draw similar to the ones issued for Custer State Park. Maybe if late in the season the quota has not been met, permits are issued for the use of dogs to aid in efforts of meeting the quota?
- 1880 no snow was a big factor on hunting

- 1888 Keep the same quota please! These are very tough animals to hunt. Low harvest numbers relate to the lack of prime hunting conditions this winter. There are many lions out there, just need the right conditions for more than a day or two to get on them and harvest an animal. We as hunters have a profound respect for these animals.
- 1890 There are plenty of lions but no snow to hunt them.
- 1901 We should be able to use hounds to better manage the lions. Maybe the season could open up first of December to take advantage of snow to better hunt the cats. The people that live a few hours from the hills don't go hunt the lions unless there is snow.
- 1910 grow the elk herd
- 1912 Need to place this predator under control. Don't make us get a mtn lion tag to apply for the in the park lion tag. I didn't even go and wouldn't go on this tag. This survey does not even pertain to me.
- 1914 I would be in favor of the use of dogs to hunt Lions in the Black Hills area.
- 1918 I am still against allowing the use of dogs in the Black Hills outside of Custer State Park
- 1921 I feel that the amount of snow that we get in the Black Hills determines how well hunters do. Since we haven't had a lot of snow the last couple of years the numbers shot have been low.
- 1924 with the success of hound hunting in Custer State Park and the lack of success of boot hunters anywhere in the hills would like to see hounds allowed to be used statewide
- 1927 I would like to have an option to apply for the Custer State Park hunt with dogs without having to buy a lion tag to apply. The hunt is different enough to justify a separate drawing without having to buy a tag first.
- 1930 I didn't hunt outside of Custer State Park, but I did help hunt 10 days inside the park using my dog. I thank you for that opportunity and for the passage of using dogs outside of the black hills! That being said, I think the best way to control the lion population and prevent problem lions, is to use dogs everywhere. With the use of dogs you can study the animal you are about to harvest, and make sure it's not a nursing female. Thanks again
- 1932 More snow would have been nice but it was a decent year. I like the deer numbers I am seeing now!
- 1937 We live by experimental forest in the Black Hills. Starting to see more deer and elk in our area. Keep the Mtn. Lion season going.
- 1951 Last year was the first time we've had an elk calf survive at the ranch in 4 years. Our deer herd is growing also sure nice to see them out in the fields again. Keep up the good work!
- 1954 When will there be a lottery with preference points to run dogs in Custer State Park?
- 1959 I did not get a chance to hunt the Black Hills this year but plan to in the future. I purchased my license primarily for the statewide unit this year.
- 1973 I believe that the number of cats killed is directly related to the amount of snow fall, this year there was very little snow, I normally hunt by finding fresh tracks in the snow and with little to no snow while hunting this year, I didn't find any fresh racks.

- 1978 Need to give out more dog tags!!!! Also issue the use of dogs outside the state park!!!!
- 2005 I really enjoy mountain lion hunting in SD. I'm glad we have the opportunity to hunt such an amazing animal in our wonderful State. My hunting partner and I have yet to harvest a lion but we have cut tracks on most days, found 2 caches and had 6 lions on our trail camera this year. The first cat came in 3 hours after we set it up! I will continue to hunt lions in SD as long as there is a season.
- 2006 Continue with the statewide year long season outside the Black Hills.
- 2007 Keep the use of dogs out of the black hills area, except the park. It would seem very unfair to all hunters without access to dogs or to those who just don't want to use them.
- 2022 I only buy the tag, because I consider myself an outdoors person and I don't want to ever miss the opportunity to shoot a cat if one is ever seen. At the moment I do not plan to ever hunt in the hills.
- 2034 The weather did not help during my lion hunt. Too much snow and too windy. Tried calling where a miniature horse had been killed by a lion. Hunted in the northern hills, would hunt lion again.
- 2039 Thank you for allowing the use of dogs to hunt on the prairie - that is awesome! Perhaps there will be a time when we can also use the dogs to hunt in the Black Hills. In my opinion, this is the most logical approach to reducing the population overall.
- 2046 I fell we need to lower the limit to bring numbers back up
- 2059 The last 2 years the quotas for the seasons have not been met. What does the department think the reason for this is? Is there a reduction in the mountain lion population or does the lions\ population fear humans more and stay more reclusive or do you think there are other reasons? I would appreciate a return comment on this matter.
- 2060 Do not allow lion hunting with dogs in the Black Hills season. It is fine for the rest of the state. Thank you.
- 2065 open the mtn lion season during deer hunting season so those of us with limited time and resources could hunt both species at the same time. Open lion hunting up for dog hunters on January 1st.
- 2066 The lions have killed most of the deer in my area (Eastern Meade Co) I haven't lost livestock but friends have.
- 2072 I hunted lions for only 3 days this year because of other commitments. While calling, on all three sets we encountered lions!!!! Two of the three sets we had the lion within 20 to 30 yards from us but could not see them because of daylight was dwindling. On the third set we had a lion come in about 80 yards downhill from us and my son only had his open sight 30-30 so he decided to wait for a better shot so he would not take the chance of wounding the lion. The lion decided to walk the other direction. I believe there is a large population of lions knowing we called in three lions on three sets.
- 2075 seems to be plenty of lions in the hills, not much snow made it difficult to hunt and I am sure was a big factor on number of cats harvested.
- 2087 Was unable to hunt black hills mountain lion because of medical reasons.

- 2092 I love the opportunity to chase lions every year. I haven't shot one yet because I'm waiting for a crusty old male like me. I do not ever want the hunting season outside the park to open up to dogs because I'm a landowner in Custer and I don't want dogs running through my property. Thank you for managing South Dakota's wildlife resources so that people like me can enjoy fair chase.
- 2093 Allow hound hunting in the Black Hills.
- 2099 I didn't make it out hunting this year.
- 2120 If you have a large lion population you have nothing else.
- 2121 I would like to see dogs being able to get used, at least for part of the hunting season.
- 2122 no snow, no dogs, not enough cats shot
- 2123 had a great time
- 2147 Let us hunt with dogs
- 2150 There is no reason for hunting with dogs in the Black hills. That includes the current CSP option.
- 2157 We needed more snow. We had no to very little snow all year. So shooting the cats we did without dogs was unbelievable. With that I'm sure our cat population is still strong. But honestly I only purchased my tag for a shot at getting a dog tag in the park and as active as I am in the hills all year long if I see a cat I would have a tag to harvest it.
- 2162 I prefer to be allowed to purchase a license and not get the time to hunt rather than to not be allowed a chance for a license. As for my preferred mountain lion population, I like to hunt deer and elk and I view the mountain lion as a threat to the deer and elk population. I trust the SD GFP or the general human population would not allow hunters to wipe out the Black Hills mountain lion population completely so I say we keep harvesting them until they are absolutely no longer a threat to the deer and elk herds. As for the revenue generated to the SD GFP from licenses, I would think there is a greater chance for more dollars collected from higher deer and elk tag sales than there is from mountain lion tag sales. Local businesses probably gain more from increased deer and elk tags than they do from the volume of mountain lion tags sold. To me, a low mountain lion population allows for a better chance for the deer and elk herds to rebuild ...which in turn should generate more dollars for the SD GFP and the local businesses. Thank you
- 2165 Didn't have the snow and I believe the lions are getting call shy like other animals do. We need to implement dogs to clean up the season
- 2166 It is astounding that 43 lions were harvested during the 2015 season, mostly by boot hunters, given the absolutely worst snow and tracking conditions since the inaugural lion season in SD. The stated population goal of 175 + or - 25 lions will never be reached until something changes. Undoubtedly, [GFP staff] and [GFP staff] will spin the low harvest number as proof that the population is rapidly declining. Nothing could be further from the truth...I have hunted lions every year since 2005 and I have never seen the number of kills and tracks that I did this year (*when there was snow). But I am sure the wheels will have to fall off even further before those folks finally decide it is time for a reality check... makes my head hurt!
- 2168 Health issues kept me from hunting

- 2175 I like the fact that lions are fair game year-round outside the fire protection district, especially now that dogs may be utilized. The only reason that I get a tag is to be able to take advantage of any opportunity that may arise while I am engaged in other outdoor activities throughout the year. I have not actively hunted the lion nor do I anticipate doing so.
- 2179 I purchased a mountain lion tag so I could apply for a Custer State Park dog permit and didn't get my choices. I don't care for having to buy that before I can apply for a permit.
- 2180 No snow made it very hard to hunt lions this year. Would like the use of dogs in the Black Hills.
- 2194 I was not able to get out and hunt due to the unseasonable weather on weekends. No snow
- 2203 I cut 2 sets of tracks one had kittens, due to no snow in my area it was hard track them. But it is fun!
- 2205 wasn't planning on hunting for Mt lions in the BH this year. had to buy a license to be eligible for the park hunt. think there is a better way of doing the Park license!
- 2214 The population has been decreased in the hills to numbers that are noticeably at a point of going too far with reduction of #s. the deer and elk #s have increased and have rebounded nicely. Every year I see more yearling calves in the herds of cow elk. EVERY year, I spend countless days and hours keeping tabs on the elk herds, and I've seen the counts make great increases. Unfortunately I also feel that we are going too far with the cat harvest, and I'm happy to see a bad year for snow. It has helped keep the harvest # down, compared to the quota. I would like to see the quota lowered, and entertain a dog season in the hills along with in the park. The cats are learning to become call shy, just like the elk have learned. It's very close to having a perfect balance of coexistence of all wild game in the hills. (other than the porcupine!)
- 2215 Weather just didn't cooperate when it would have worked out to go hunting. Hopefully next year.
- 2222 No snow contributed to poor harvest plus dogs should be allowed outside of the park
- 2227 If dogs are allowed in the future in the hills, it needs to be its own season. I'm for them, but I'm an avid caller and would like the chance to call one in. If it's a free for all with dogs, it will become commercialized and you will weed out guys. my opinion
- 2233 Should be open season on them.
- 2242 I would like to see a mountain lion trapping season on the prairie
- 2246 The reason for less lions was the weather. The working man has only the weekend to hunt so when it snows in the middle of the week and the wind blows hard most weekends it doesn't make for good hunting. Hard to track with no fresh snow and tough to call in heavy wind.
- 2254 I would like to see more walleye fishing opportunities in the Black Hills area. Thank you.
- 2256 If you have hunters successful every year, look into their methods. Some are surely cheating

- 2262 Keep the dogs and dog hunters out of the black hills. Allowing the use of dogs in the black hills (excluding Custer State Park) will turn this into a rich man's sport just like it has across the rest of the Western states and will ruin the hunting opportunity for everyone else.
- 2268 Please consider using dogs to hunt mtn. lions at Elk Mountain along the Wyoming/South Dakota border. Wyoming can use dogs. Also this would help the bighorn sheep lambs that are being born a chance to live longer than the first 48 hours when the mtn lions are killing them. Thank you for considering.
- 2272 Dogs statewide!!!!!!!
- 2276 Still too many lions in the hills. They are devastating the elk and deer population.
- 2280 It would be a lot better and smarter to have the use of hounds during the mountain lion seasons! It would help aid in the taking of the mature lions male or female and help keep the population stable and healthy, along with ensuring the lions that are taken with clean and appropriate shots which would allow smaller percentage of injury to the cats. Using hounds would also help get the lions out of some more populated areas where there won't be as much harm or possibility of harm to people, children, or animals.
- 2281 Keep up the good work with the mtn lion season. Don't cave under pressure and keep the season up, however if the SDGFP wants to manage the program and reduce either males or females I would let folks use dogs within the Black Hills Fire Protection District. Thanks!
- 2285 Without the use of dogs, a year like this past year with little snow is a very hard year to hunt. You need to allow dogs for hunting in the Black Hills.
- 2306 I buy the license mostly to be able to shoot a mountain lion on the ranch that might prevent a problem.
- 2308 I believe that we need to have a hound season outside the park to help in hunting call wise cats, and to remove the larger toms. Do some select harvesting. Thanks
- 2318 It was difficult to get out to hunt with my work schedule, so I only hunted part days and was not able to hunt as much as I hoped to. I would like to see the season start earlier in December, this I think might help for hunters being able to get out more with favorable snow conditions for tracking. Thank You
- 2321 No snow and No dogs not worth my time
- 2327 Use of dogs last month of season
- 2333 I feel the season should be held in conjunction with black hills deer season
- 2342 I did not get the chance to actually hunt for a cat due to work
- 2345 This year's weather did not really help for hunting cats I would like to see the use of dogs in the hills also
- 2353 I found sign on every hunt.
- 2354 You really should start this season in November so those that have a deer tag have the option of a lion tag to. A few years back it was this way and I would think it would bring in a bit more funds for the game and fish department. Also when applying for the Custer lion season you should have it be like elk tags when applying, just do a 5.00 preference

- point. This would also help in increasing funds to. Pass a bill and let hunters use dogs in the hills
- 2358 Thank you for your mountain lion management program
- 2371 Make the season so we can hunt with dogs. Lack of snow this year made it not even worth hunting
- 2378 the lack of snow and the muddy roads where bad for lion hunting this year.
- 2379 The weather was against my hunting; too dry and not enough snow. Also lots of wind.
- 2386 Run the season concurrent with deer season.
- 2395 I am seeing wolves moving in a little bit. wondering if that will affect mountain lions.
- 2409 There wasn't enough snow to locate tracks this year. It's kind of hard to chase them if there aren't any tracks to follow. No luck this year. Maybe it'll be better next year.
- 2413 In the areas where I have been hunting since 1963, the lion sign has greatly increased, and the deer and coyote populations have greatly decreased. I do feel that the lion population needs to be reduced drastically.
- 2414 Still plenty of Mt lions out there keep the quota at 75.
- 2418 I think I am seeing a few more deer so what you are doing is working for me
- 2420 Do not allow dogs as it gives an unfair advantage to those able to afford guides. After all it is a sport and not about killing. I hunted hard for many days and did not see a mountain lion. Therefore, I feel the lion population is not a problem.
- 2421 we have lions in our neighborhood because they have been seen several times over the past years - our deer population is about 25% of what it was 7-8 years ago
- 2425 I seen three maybe four cats in the Beaver Park area.
- 2430 I hunted close to home - Rochford area and saw sign but saw no lions. Our deer and turkey population has declined significantly over the past 4 years and I think lions have been the primary cause
- 2431 Influenza hit me and then the family - season over - mountain lion - not flu
- 2434 Let us use dogs
- 2436 Tired of buying a tag just to have a chance to hunt with hounds. I have no interest in hunting without my dogs. Would be great to apply without buying a tag unless I draw a permit for the hound season.
- 2437 God provided a surplus of game animals for carnivores to enjoy. I don't advocate the extinction of the mountain lion in the Black Hills, but the number should be greatly reduced for the game animals to go around.
- 2443 As a big game hunter, I greatly appreciate how GFP has been managing the mountain lion population the last five years. I have found a lot less sign and significantly less kill sites than I have the past few years, but there are still a few cats out there which is pretty cool. I appreciate the opportunity to hunt them fair chase and would like to see GFP continue with this management plan. I would like to keep the dog hunting in Custer State Park and on the prairie, as I think opening that up though the Black Hills would have a

- negative impact on the hundreds of hunters who do not have access to dogs. Keep up the good work.
- 2448 Had a back injury so I could not hunt. Called in a small cat the first day but could not take a shot and hurt my back the next week.
- 2453 My son and I were able to identify 4 different mtn lions by their tracks and travel time in an 8 square mile area of boulder canyon. Two of them were a female and cub and 1 was very large and one was a medium to large cat. We were able to see their tracks after 2 different snows. The very large one crossed the tracks we left and when we came back within an hour there was a very fresh cat track.
- 2455 I only hunted Fall River County. Is there any conjecture as to why no mountain lions were taken in Fall River County?
- 2459 I believe the perfect lion population will be reached when the sightings and incidents go from commonplace to rare. I have multiple "documented" sightings and routinely see lions and lion sign. In my opinion there are still too few deer, elk and sheep.
- 2470 No hunting with dogs, EVER!
- 2478 not enough snow to hunt effectively without the use of dogs...
- 2480 When the season hits March. Open it up with dogs. This year since conditions were crazy. Recommended additional 5 days when we get our spring snow storm.
- 2481 this year there was no snow to track by and when can't use dogs makes it very hard to hunt
- 2484 Don't expand hunting with dogs in the Black Hills! I am fine with using dogs on the Prairie and Custer State Park. I would stop lion hunting if I had to compete with dogs. I think the job of Game Fish to identify how many mountain lions there are in the Black Hills is a tall order. With that said there are some areas in the Black Hills that may have too many lions but I think in most areas we have a nice balance at this point. I see many more nice deer in areas that were cleaned out of game a few years back. If we have areas that have a lion problems a depredation hunt might be what we need to bring the numbers down.
- 2490 Very hard hunt. Not much fun.
- 2499 You better figure out how many you really have before you continue over harvesting females
- 2506 I saw one.
- 2511 Dogs have no place in the hunt in the hills
- 2516 It's hard to understand how a landowner should receive a depredation elk tag and at the same time, not want dogs to be used for mountain lion hunting.
- 2520 Didn't make it out hunting even once this season, no snow pack the days I would have had time.
- 2525 It's a fun option to hunting Mtn. Loins. I enjoy it.
- 2526 The season was dissatisfying because of the lack of snow. This was not the SDGFP's fault, but that is why I was dissatisfied with the season. And yes, I would like to see the

- lion populations dramatically decreased because I would like to see more deer and elk, not cats! Please do not reintroduce wolves; we really won't have a big game population then.
- 2532 let us hunt with dogs!
- 2546 I don't think you know how many lions are in the hills. I would like to know how you estimate the population when they are mostly nocturnal.
- 2551 Had health issue's couldn't get out, hope to next year. I really appreciate all you folks do for wildlife and conservation thereof, in the state of South Dakota! You guys are great!
- 2554 I would like to see the statewide mountain lion tags fillable by trapping.....outside the Black Hills Fire District. This is an unmanaged population and trapping should be allowed to fill that tag. I have had landowners request that I try and trap a lion that they have seen hanging around their farmstead.
- 2555 Boot hunts only. No dogs
- 2562 I have seen a mountain lion on my property so am concerned as I have a small dog and want to see to her safety. I believe last year someone harvested the old lion who lived on state land behind me. He was seen many times by the Crew but never by us soo figure he was an experienced hunter and kept the wounded deer, turkey, etc harvested. Now he is gone and younger inexperienced one has taken over the area. I like seeing and sharing nature with the natural wildlife and think harvesting the old animals has iterfered with the natural balance of nature. I trust the GF&P to make good decisions by dealing with facts and keep emotions out of it. I am Mick Muck's widow and learned many things about sharing nature with the natural habitat and want to preserve as mch as possible for future generations. Respectfully, Shirley Muck, 1845 Christensen Dr. , Spearfish,SD 57783
- 2563 use hounds everywhere
- 2566 Might open it earlier with deer season.
- 2571 I was not successful in harvesting a mountain lion in 2015. Maybe it had to do with my timing, maybe it had to do with the lack of snowfall (and again my timing), but it boiled down to the fact that I couldn't find one that was either hungry enough, or simply dumb enough to be called in.... I saw MANY tracks on different occasions (including times I was not hunting), but this is a very reclusive animal, and I do not believe that the quota was not reached because of lack of population. This was my first year I was able to hunt of the last three years of applying for tags. Please keep the current harvest limit number in place for 2016.
- 2572 Season was hard to hunt this year for lack of snow for tracking/hunting.
- 2575 I did not participate in the 2015 Black Hills mountain lion season but I did get to hunt in Custer State Park with hounds. I really enjoy this season. I hope that CSP continues with the hound hunting season and would like to see other special locations in the hills implement this type of season with the hounds. Also I don't feel that the big private ranches within the Black Hills Fire Protection Area should be excluded from the use of hounds. These are the guys that seem to have the most problems with cats and should be able to acquire the use of hounds when needed. Thanks!

- 2585 Not having hunted the amount of time I would have hoped this season I found out of the days I spent in the field a great learning opportunity. First I learned weather i.e. snow greatly aids chances on finding an animal for harvest. Secondly the numbers of cats in the Hills is extreme in my eyes as I encountered tracks on all days afield except one. The day I did not find a track was very windy and drifted my own tracks shut behind me so I assume they were around this day also. 3 out of the eight days provided multiple tracks during the day with the most being 4 separate sets. With this I'd be a strong backer for allowed use of dogs to promote a suitable yearly harvest in times of an open winter such as this year to provide a manageable population.
- 2591 I really appreciate the opportunity to hunt mountain lions and I like the current season and the way that it is set-up. It gives hunters a lot of time to be afield and enjoy the hunting experience. This year the warm weather made hunting a lot tougher than usual, but that is just the way that hunting goes sometimes. Please do not expand the use of hounds any further, as it will take away the ability of those of us who do not own or wish to own hounds to pursue lions in a true sporting fashion.
- 2598 Consider the age structure of harvested cats when evaluating the population. The presence of older cats (>3 years) indicates that the population is not being truncated due to harvest. If only 1 and 2 yr old cats were being harvested that would indicate that additive mortality is likely occurring due to harvest and annual mortality is likely quite high. Additionally, the number of cats shot in a year is likely a poor indicator of the overall population as effort is likely highly variable between years making comparisons between years using only the number of harvested cats difficult at best. Furthermore, using anecdotal information from "boots on the ground" hunters is of little use as it is hard to quantify and is highly biased. Trust the biologists. Thank you
- 2600 The lack of snow made hunting lions without dogs all but impossible. The low harvest number reflects that.
- 2603 I don't know what the current population of the mountain lions in the hills so I can't comment on if I would like them to increase or decrease.
- 2608 Think there would be more success if opened season earlier while some other big game seasons are on
- 2617 I am not in favor of having the Black Hills season opened to the use of dogs during the entire season. While it is true hunting without dogs is tougher, in my opinion it is more sporting.
- 2634 This winter weather was not very good for cat hunting due to very little fresh snow. The lack of fresh snow made it hard to track fresh tracks.
- 2646 Let hunters use dogs for part of the season so the quota can be filled
- 2661 Due to an injury I was only able to hunt a few days but with the limited amount of snow cover the hunting wasn't as good.
- 2663 Allow hounds throughout the Hills.
- 2667 Most of my hunting buddies have moved away and others are always busy. I don't like going out alone anymore, and this year there wasn't enough snow for tracking.

- 2681 I think the majority of the people in SD would like to see and hunt Elk and Deer instead of having a large population of mountain lions. Only very few people get to see the big cats. Hundreds of people bring in income to the state viewing and hunting elk and deer.
- 2700 Being 5 hours from the hills I am limited to time I can hunt and its weather dependent to have a good hunt. Because of this and a number of other reasons I am against opening the Hills to hounds. It seems they are gaining momentum and got their foot in the door. I feel the hunt will be diminished for the majority of hunters that don't have access to dogs and the season may not last as long if dogs are allowed limiting the time one can get out to hunt.
- 2705 For 2 years running quotas have not been met. I personally believe the quota needs to be lowered until it can be met to be sure we are not over harvesting our Lion population.
- 2708 Less boot hunters in CSP. More dog permits allowed in CSP. Lower the quota. Hunt anywhere with dogs.
- 2712 We have had several lions in our area over the past years. Some right in our yard and under our deck. I did not go out and do a lot of actual hunting, except for a couple of times. I do not want to go on any private land or where I should not be, that's the reason for not going very far from our land.
- 2717 People are still driving around the closed gates here in the Black Hills. This isn't fair for us hunters that walk.... The weather was a huge factor in my hunting...I would have been out there much more if there would have been more snow to track them with....I don't think it's that there are less cats, it's just that we can't find them without any snow.
- 2720 thanks for opening up hound hunting on the prairie. We are seeing the results! Keep it up in CSP too!
- 2742 Seen a lot of tracks. I think it can be left just like it is.
- 2758 Need to use dogs statewide.
- 2768 I would like to see a map showing confirmed sightings or sign. I live near Lennox and a cat was spotted 1/2 mile from my house in early March. I have young children and only purchased the tag for protection. I know the probability is slim of an attack on a person, but I'm sure they're more unpredictable when out of their normal territory. If it was known one was in the area, it would be a tool to help inform the public and keep them safe.
- 2774 I think the lion numbers have decreased significantly. Just in the stratabowl area alone 10 lions were harvested last year. It seems the same small group of people harvest these lions every year. If we consider making a successful lion hunter ineligible for 1 or two years post a lion harvest, this would help replenish the lion numbers and make a better hunting experience for other hunters. Thank you for considering my opinion.
- 2797 I normally tag along with friends to the hills for other reasons, was not able to go this year. The area we normally stay is around Custer. We have seen a few lions in the past years but they seem to have moved to different areas or there are fewer of them as we have not seen any for about two years now. We have noticed that there are more turkeys the last couple of years though.
- 2813 This was a tough hunt this year with limited snow cover in the area which I hunted. I did see more lion sign this year than in other years but did not have enough time to spend on the hunt. Allowing dogs will certainly help with harvests but it will always fall into the

- "pay" category for those who don't have access to or want to pay a private operation with dogs to harvest a lion.
- 2815 I'm in it for the hunt, not the kill. The chance to hunt and possibly take a lion is priceless to me. I am no wildlife biologist so I can't say if I want more or less lions as I don't know how they are affecting deer/elk populations. I'm sure they are taking a toll but why should it be easy for big game hunters to kill a deer or an elk?
- 2816 Should be able to shoot them at free will. Should not have to buy a tag. Its dumb they were released in the first place kind of like the wolves. SD is a ranching and farming place. I think you guys try to make too much money. Making people buy a preference point is a bunch of bull. Hunting in my own state shouldn't cost as much as it does.
- 2819 Please continue the opportunity to hunt outside the black hills - it is important that hunting east of the river stays available.
- 2827 went to the hills hunting them the first couple years. Found out if you are not a local or know someone who is, you will be very lucky to see one. Not complaining just saying. I'm in my late 60's and just too hard of a hunt for me and my knees. I still buy a license and hope I see one East river. You know it could happen
- 2850 As a rancher I believe the lion population has increased in the northern foothills of the Black Hills we see evidence and have had local sightings all the time. I also see the deer population has decreased a lot. We have seen lions harvested within one mile of our headquarters every year and have seen multiple deer kills. I'm very concerned about domestic livestock.
- 2853 Had a knee replacement so only was able to hunt late in the season for a few hours each morning or evening
- 2868 My friends and I killed 2 lions in 2 days during the first January snowstorm. The snow came on Sunday and I took a ride to scout for tracks. I located a group of 5, a mom and 2 cubs and 1 juvenile tracks and a single [male] track 4 miles from my house I called my friend and told him he needed to get here quick before the snow passed. They arrived that night @ 10:00 and I took them down the road 1/2 mile from the house and showed them a totally different track from the others, I had located just before day. The fellas tracked this cat 3.5 miles before killing it after they jumped it the next am. On the way, they cut a new (different) huge male track which I saw last year, and a smaller single track. Fortunately for us, a bobcat hunter and his dogs got into "the herd" of cats and broke them up. We located a single track that night, tracked it till dark, picked it up the next morning, and jumped and killed it, all within 5 miles from my home. As you know, we had a very dry, mild winter and never got another substantial snow. The rest of the year, The one day we got a skiff I located the big male's track and tracked him to a sunny slope and lost him The other day we got an inch and tracked a cat until other hunters picked it up in front of me. My friend and I have killed 5 cats now in the last 5 years just by tracking them. We NEVER have a problem locating tracks in the snow. The problem with this is that the deer, elk, and turkey populations are taking big hits because of the big kitties. I am in the woods a lot and know how to read sign, and am sure we have way too many cats here, especially there are supposed to be 4-5 cats in a hundred square miles.. Once, about 4 years ago, we cut tracks of 8 cats in a group....what's up with that? thanks
- 2871 Lack of snow. Lots of sign. Old snow=walking on corn flakes.

- 2905 Was not able to hunt as much as I would have liked. Otherwise no suggestions or problems/concerns with the season.
- 2913 I am a landowner on the plains and only bought the license to protect my calves against mountain lions. Your survey should be updated if you really want to know what's going on.
- 2921 We have a cabin by Black Fox Campground, we have always seen multiple Lion tracks and markings in that area. Last summer they increased to the point they would come and yowl at us in the evening when we set outside and visited. I got a license this year to try to reduce the lion population in the area due to small grandchildren we have at the cabin with us. Once the snow came on all we found was wolf sign and tracks. We didn't see any lion tracks until the very last snow and it was a nice size track but it was only one set of tracks and then the lion moved on right away. We have seen numerous wolf tracks and sign in the area and I am more concerned in seeing the wolf tracks than the lion as far as our safety is concerned when going for hikes with our grandchildren. We have a cabin to enjoy the wilderness and feel it is important to live in harmony with nature but the point is to LIVE with nature and not die by it. Serious management needs to occur if multiple predator species are going to be in this tiny 50 mile by 100 mile forest range. I don't feel there are enough deer and elk in this area to support the number of predators we are seeing.
- 2924 still plenty lions just haven't had very good weather for hunting.
- 2932 it was really frustrating seeing a lot of hunters going around gates on four wheelers. and also the amount of people with dogs is unreal. something needs to be done with all the people taking dogs in the hills during lion season.
- 2948 Absolutely under no circumstances should dogs be allowed to harvest mountain lions in the Black Hill Fire Protection District. That would ruin lion hunting in the hills for the way all of us love to hunt them. They would no longer respond to calls and a lot less people would hunt them. So keep dogs out of the hills
- 2953 I'm driving semi-truck over the road and didn't get a chance to go hunting cats. But I was wondering why they haven't filled the kill allowance over the last 2-3 seasons????
- 2973 Slow hunt No snow. Trails (ATV) closed that often used off season???? Again Why????? US Fish and you need to talk.
- 2976 Need to allow hunting statewide with dogs.
- 2979 use dogs in all units all the time.
- 2985 I was raised in the Black Hills. When I was hunting I found tracks every place I stopped along with other sign. I wish we could use dogs in the fire district. I will continue to hunt them out here by my house. You all have more work to do to save the deer population.
- 2989 Far too many lions in SD They have decreased the deer and elk population mostly West River and the Black Hills, to the point that we no longer hunt the hills.
- 2991 I hunted 2 days this season. I observed two mountain lions while tracking. The first was a 9 year old female my friend shot right in front of me. The second was the 4 year old male I killed the following day while tracking. While driving the service roads during our two days of hunting we witnessed 7 sets of lion tracks in the Custer area. I have taken two lions in the three seasons I have held a license. I truly believe we have a lot of lions

in the hills and they are very easy to hunt if the hunter gets out of the truck and has the moxy to track one down and not give up on a track. I hope GFP takes into consideration the fact that we have had very little snow cover over the past three seasons and it is imperative to have snow to successfully track a lion. I believe this is the reason for not coming close to the quota over the last few seasons. I also hope that GFP doesn't implement a dog season and rob this great hunting opportunity from the hard working hunters and hand it over to the lazy rich man who will be paying houndsmen to tree him a cat. Thank you for your time and consideration.

- 2992 In the past 8 years our elk and deer herds have declined dramatically in the Black Hills, I understand there are many factors, but as someone who spends a lot of time in the hills year round, the one thing that stands out to me is the increase in lion sign and the amount of elk and deer kills by lion that I find now compared to years prior. As an outdoor lover and hunter, I do not want these majestic, wonderful lions to be eliminated from the hills; I just want the population managed better. We know there is more out there than what the public is told. Thank you for your continued efforts on this subject.
- 2994 didn't even see any lion sign after 2 snows...our lion numbers are way down. If they are truly a game species, then we need to manage them accordingly. What happens when deer #s go down - the tags are cut and the population bounces back. Let's do the same for our lion population
- 2996 Was not able to get out and hunt this year due to work commitments, but I do like the manner you are managing the lion population in SD. There is obviously a lot less lion sign out there than there has been over the past few years, but did cut some track while out cutting wood a few times. Please do not allow hound hunting in the Black Hills area.
- 2999 No problems with this season from GFP side. Crappy season just due to the snow. Thanks!
- 3010 You normally ask if we saw or tracked cats. We saw two, but were unable to take shots.
- 3021 Like many hunters, I didn't hunt many days due to lack of snow.
- 3022 I did not get a chance to mtn lion hunt this year. I typically purchase a license just by the off chance I will get some free time to hunt but mostly as a way to donate a little money knowing the odds of me getting out hunting are slim to none. And I carry the license with me on the prairie since they pass through our area quite often throughout the year.
- 3032 The lion population around the Sturgis area still seems pretty high.
- 3033 I would like to see the tags and rules stay the same, no dogs used in the Black Hills, more fresh snow would have helped our season a lot! Thanks
- 3035 Had a big male lion 200 yards from my house on December 24 and never saw him again
- 3038 I did not harvest a mountain lion this year or last year but still love the fact that I have the opportunity in South Dakota to do so. I hope that there will always be a season. Thank you.
- 3041 Let us use dogs in Black Hills! So people stop shooting these little cats.
- 3045 I would like to see the Black Hills population reduced... I live just outside of Sioux Falls, and we've witnessed mountain lions on our property a few times over the last 3 years. I'm concerned population density in the Black Hills is high resulting in more of the lions being pushed hundreds of miles out. I don't actively hunt mountain lions, but purchase a

license in an effort to legally keep our home safe from these larger predators, as I have pets and 3 small children... Also heard from sportsmen and biologist both, that the number of elk, deer and sheep in the Black Hills are down considerably as a result of too high a mountain lion population.

- 3057 need to be able to use dogs
- 3072 Never got time to make it out there.
- 3075 Thanks! SDGFP
- 3093 No snow did not go
- 3115 snow conditions were not good but we can't do much about that
- 3150 I like the hunting season set up like it is. I don't like the use of dogs. I think opening the season to hunting with dogs would commercialize the hunt...because I don't think someone simply calling or stalking could compete with a bunch of outfitters running around with packs of dogs. If GFP ever feels like the hunt as it is now, does not control the population enough, I'd rather see GFP trap or hunt to control the population, and leave the hunting experience as it is for state residence. I hunted for 4 years before I got mine, and that is one hunt that I will never forget!
- 3161 I would like to know where lions had been harvested so you are not hunting an area that may not have a lion at that time.
- 3162 In three days of hunting I saw one mountain lion. I like the season and regulations just fine. Keep the dogs out
- 3170 I am opposed to using dogs to hunt lions. It really puts those of us that can't afford contracting with a guide with dogs at a disadvantage. It also undermines the sportsmen aspect of the hunt. If dogs are going to be allowed, I will no longer buy a license.
- 3171 No need for hunting with hounds in the Black Hills.
- 3178 I was blackmailed into purchasing a mountain lion tag, because all I wanted to do was apply for the dog hunting seasons in Custer State Park. I believe the novelty of mountain lion hunting has worn off.
- 3190 I loved the opportunity to hunt the Black Hills! DO NOT allow hound hunting in the Black Hills! Discontinue the ability to use hounds for hunting bobcat(s) in the Black Hills. I really don't believe guys are walking away from treed lions. Bobcat numbers need to increase, now that lion numbers are under control.
- 3194 Turkey numbers are way down, possibly close fall seasons and limit one gobbler per resident. Also mule deer numbers are way low, close mule deer season for at least 2 years. I don't feel the mountain lion is to blame for low turkey and deer numbers. Thank you
- 3214 The continuation of the policy to not allow dogs in the Black Hills makes no sense. I'm sorry that you think there will be a large number of landowner complaints but that is part of your job. Asinine policy based on pure laziness.
- 3233 need to allow dogs outside park in hills
- 3239 it's all good. no snow this year made it a little tougher

- 3244 The use of hounds inside the Black Hills needs to be allowed.
- 3248 very upset with how lion inspection was conducted. sure seemed like they used every possible reason they could to accuse the cat of being trapped
- 3264 Kill them all! They are predators and they prey on our game, deer, elk, turkeys.
- 3269 it would be easier to hunt unicorns
- 3281 I did not hunt, just purchased a tag just in case I saw one.
- 3283 Very cold when there was snow. No snow to track most of the time.
- 3284 I saw several cats, mostly females with cubs; my guess is there were 12 total in my area. I do not think GFP has an accurate count, as many of those cats cross the same area, making 4 females for sure in one canyon. Please keep the limit at 75 w-50 females, as I feel we are trophy hunting now like I was looking for a big tom rather than another female, which I don't need-want. There are more cats and less deer-elk in my area between Piedmont and Nemo.
- 3291 Do not like seeing dogs being used, hope it is never allowed in the hills. I believe this will cause too many problems with landowners. Weather was the biggest reason I did not hunt more this year.
- 3299 It should be obvious that the limit needs to come down. You have stretched the limit far too much over the last three years. If you expect to see lions in the future please let professionals decide on management and lower the limit so we don't hunt them to extinction.
- 3302 snow did not cooperate this season
- 3326 didn't actively hunt. didn't see one
- 3337 I have a cat near my home. Just got tag in case I saw him.
- 3350 I went out and while I saw many tracks there just wasn't enough snow this year. Harvesting lions was mainly a snowy thing and when there's no snow it is very, very hard to find and I don't think the quota should move.
- 3351 Have season start sooner...when first snow falls to track better.
- 3356 never had an opportunity to go this year, you need to allow dogs in all areas in the future.
- 3361 Believe there might be more success and participation if season coincided with other big game seasons
- 3369 To be honest, I purchased a mountain lion tag so that I would have one in case I came across one outside the Black Hills while hunting during other seasons or when I am out hiking or involved in other outdoor activities. I don't have enough information available to me to make an informed decision regarding how many lions should be harvested in the Black Hills Fire Protection District. Thanks
- 3388 Lots of lion sign. Lots of young lion sign too - many multiple groups. Hunting conditions were poor most of the season due to poor snow conditions. Healthy lions of good size taken this year, that is really nice to see. Would it ever be possible to extend the season

- when the snow conditions are so poor and the harvest is so low below the quota you are looking to meet?
- 3390 We spend a great deal of time on the hills and hardly see any elk and I believe mtn lions are part of the blame. It would be nice to have the season run at the same time as deer season.
- 3411 Need to allow more hound hunts especially since last two years have had poor snow conditions and therefore unable to fill quota
- 3412 I would like to see an early archery mountain lion season open at the same time as archery deer.
- 3415 I would like to see the use of dogs in all of the Black Hills areas, a lot of the areas have very rough country and very difficult to harvest a lion without the use of a dog
- 3419 I hope we continue the mountain lion seasons. The only thing I would like to change is that mountain lions be hunted year-round. Just like all other predators.
- 3427 I would like to see the use of dogs allowed during the season outside CSP.
- 3429 Wish there was a short dog season following normal season.
- 3431 I saw 3 cats this hunting season and harvested one, I also called in 2 additional cats that I did not see but came into the call. I would not like to see dogs used in the Black Hills.
- 3434 Despite popular belief, lion numbers are way down. Even the guys with hound tags struggled the last 2 years to find a track. Three years ago there were a lot of tracks to follow, but too many have been harvested.
- 3443 For the most part, the only people in SD who get to deal with the big cats are the ones of us who live in the rural areas. I'd like it a lot better if those that choose to live in town would be allowed to stay there, thereby giving a larger percentage of the people the opportunity to have to deal with the cats. While I'm on my soap box, I'd like to see the wolf population that we have eliminated before they eliminate the large game we still have here. enough said.
- 3451 I think that South Dakota offers an amazing chance to hunt cats in SD by boot hunting. It's the only place in the country that makes that possible, and I think if we would get a normal winter with snow the quota would be met every season by boot hunters.
- 3466 Would like to see the use of hounds for the entire season, not just for certain times in the park. Not for increased harvest, but for better management of older mature cats rather than seeing the younger smaller cats harvested.
- 3472 It was not good seeing small groups of deer with no fawns. Once the deer are gone pets and children are next. Need to use dogs to be more successful and less chance of killing mother with kits. With less and less deer and elk you will receive less in licensing. You already know all of this.do something.
- 3473 I am a hound hunter; it's very difficult to draw a Custer State Park lion tag. I wish there were hound tags available in other areas of the Black Hills.
- 3474 Great season even if I didn't get a lion many great times up in the hills with my dad.
- 3483 SD should allow dogs to hunt mtn lions.

- 3500 Bring back more deer & elk
- 3501 permit use of dogs
- 3508 Let us use dogs
- 3544 Reduce elk tags
- 3545 Earlier season Nov 1st
- 3548 Use of bait or dogs would help
- 3555 I did not hunt in the black hills.
- 3585 I would like a lion season every year. To keep the population wayyyy down!!! I'm tired of not being able to hunt the deer or elk cause of the population being down. I live on venison, and need it to eat every year.
- 3618 If sales statistics were anything like last year between 1 and 2% of hunters were successful, and at least one standard deviation of them localized to Custer state park (where dogs are legal). In order to more effectively manage lion populations, hunters should be allowed to use dogs in the black hills, which will result in a larger portion of adult males as percentage of the population being killed, due to increased odds of hunter success versus calling. Additionally, if more than 1 to 2% of hunters were successful, lion populations could be actively managed versus simply selling more tags and hoping that one or two more cats are taken.
- 3623 I would not like to see dogs allowed to hunt mtn. lions in SD. Let's keep the playing field level for all and keep big money out of at least one hunting season.
- 3634 I purchased a mountain lion tag for the protection of my property and livestock. I live in Mellette County and have seen mountain lions on my property 4 times in the past 2 years. If I do need to shoot one for protection of myself and/or livestock I want to be legal. I have no intention to go hunting for them in the Black Hills.
- 3635 I would like to see the use of dogs to be legal over the entire black hills, and the season extended.
- 3636 The mountain lion population needs to be controlled by hunting. How many lions should be in an area need to be decided by scientists and by professional managers.
- 3642 I did not get the chance to hunt in the hills this year but get the tag so if I would come across one while hunting other game I will be able to shoot one and help the local ranchers protect their animals locally
- 3644 I remember as a youth in the Black Hills that I was amazed how many deer you would see on an outing. Now you are very lucky to see a couple in a day's outing. I assume that is a predator problem and not over hunting. So I think the use of hounds to hunt would be better so the limit could be met each year Only then can you manage the lion population. Thanks.
- 3653 Tough winter not a lot of snow days I was able to hunt. Enjoyed the hills and the long hikes
- 3664 Would like to see more hound hunting opportunities

- 3666 I would like to see the use of dogs allowed to hunt mountain lions. I know people in the northern Black Hills and game populations are low and young deer and elk not plentiful, which lowers recreational opportunities for all sportsman. Mountain lions are playing a big role in this. Open, mild winters and wise mountain lions make it very difficult to harvest lions and the use of dogs would improve the harvest rate and lower the population numbers to help improve wildlife populations...especially young deer and elk.
- 3671 What was discouraging was the lack of snow fall!!! Was with hunter on 3rd and 7th lion killed and that was last trackable snow we had! Snow is the key to killing lions; no snow no tracks and your just calling in the wind trying to get lucky. I did call in a female with two kittens which at least gave me some of my self-confidence back. As I'm replying to this survey on my cell phone today Apr 9, we received two inches of snow!! That didn't happen Jan thru March where I live in center of hills (next to Sheridan Lake) Also would like to add that we should not let dogs in the Black Hills hunting unit!!! Would love to discuss with new Sec if possible? In closing, my two sons and I are addicted to lion hunting! It's the greatest of all hunting seasons!!!
- 3673 We need the use of dogs in the black hills to manage the cat population with dogs a hunter will be able to guess size, determine gender, and be affective in management. Hunters are taking the first shot possible at a cat and to my knowledge they are smaller, younger lions. I believe lions play a big role in our deer population so if we can take a grown male, female out of a tree with dogs I believe this will help on deer population and other small game animals such as our turkeys Thank you again,
- 3693 I think the limit should be lowered from 75 lions and 50 females to 60 lions and 45 females just because, this year; the limit was not even close to being reached. Also, allow dogs to be used in Black Hills Fire Protection District on Public Lands.
- 3701 Keep all the mountain lions in the Black Hills, thanks.
- 3703 Lack of snow was a determining factor in my hunting season. I cut two lion tracks, both small cats, in CSP. I did not have a tag for the park. I don't know the current population estimates but in talking with hound guys they seem to think the overall population is down. They are hunting bobcats and are seeing fewer lion tracks. I would like to see more areas where dogs are allowed to be used. Even a non-consumptive license.
- 3704 Had a blast hunting this year even though I did not fill my tag. The lions are getting a lot smarter as far as hunting them. Had a number of lions around but never a chance to shoot one. The numbers seem to be increasing in my area. It makes for a good outdoor adventure.
- 3718 I think South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks is doing a great job of managing the mountain lions in the Black Hills. I am very glad to say that not allowing dogs to be used whenever and wherever, like in every other state it seems, is terrific because it gives people a chance to hunt lions the more interesting and exciting way, although not always yielding results. I think it is fine that dogs are allowed in Custer State Park at certain times because there are a lot of cats in CSP, yet it still gives hunters the chance to quietly and peacefully go after cats when the dogs aren't allowed. I have hunted lions for three seasons now and although I have yet to take one from the Black Hills, I learn something new every season about these magnificent creatures. I hope to see the season become longer in the future, but I am very pleased with how GFP conducts the mountain lion season in the Black Hills otherwise.

- 3719 Thank you for adding the chance to use dogs in Custer State Park over the last couple years. I would also like to see a couple permits offered outside the park in the same over all manner of a couple tags on a limited draw.
- 3720 I'm 76 and walked a lot, but saw fewer tracks this year compared to the last 2 years. I still had fun but I have never seen one that I could shoot. I've seen them 3 different times while I was fishing.
- 3731 No snowfall made it hard to leave the house to try and call a cat
- 3733 I would like to see GFP help decrease or eliminate lions in populated areas around Angostura Lake. Thanks
- 3734 Didn't get a chance to go this year
- 3746 Would like to be able to hunt Mt Lion with dogs.
- 3748 I see no reason to kill so many every year. Lower the limit.
- 3754 Would have hunted a lot more if weather wasn't so nice :)
- 3766 I lived in Wyoming for 34 years. I have several friends there who have dogs to hunt mountain lions. I think South Dakota is missing the boat not using dogs more. I fully understand the argument of people not wanting dogs on their private land. The beauty of using dogs is it is easier harvesting lions & if it's not the one you want-you just leave!
- 3775 I would like to see the use of dogs in the Black Hills; it would allow hunters to have a better chance at filling their tags and decrease the amount of young lions taken during the season
- 3776 Please allow the use of dogs in hunting the lions as the only method proven to work in controlling their numbers to a satisfactory balance. Thank you for allowing us to take this survey.
- 3779 This was my first time hunting Mountain Lion. I just moved here from NY last May, so this was trial and error for me. When there was snow on the ground, I did see a lot of tracks. I'm a woods hunter (hunted mostly the Adirondacks in NY) and this season gave me an opportunity to learn the areas where I will probably hunt Deer if and when I'm lucky enough to draw a tag for the Black Hills. I also like hunting "dangerous" game. In NY I hunted Black Bear, so Mountain Lion is as close as I'm going to get out here. Finally, I did come across a couple of fresh deer kills while hunting cougar. No carcass, but lots of hair. Looking forward to next year!
- 3781 I called a lion in but chose not to harvest. The lion was legal but on the small side. I'm guessing around 40 to fifty pounds.
- 3785 Hunted a lot in camp 5 and saw plenty of tracks. just didn't close the deal
- 3786 Sorry didn't have much time to hunt maybe next year?
- 3791 Great season, both my dad and I harvested great cats
- 3796 I am not a professional hunter I tracked lions this year used calls and had a great hunting experience even though I did not get a lion.
- 3799 Had fun, even though we didn't see anything.

- 3818 Increase the limit of cats taken and duration of the season please.
- 3819 I believe the numbers were down due to limited snow fall
- 3821 I think it is absolutely ridiculous that I have to purchase a tag in order to put in for a CSP hound permit. You guys are basically charging me \$30 to find out if I even wanna hunt. Also let the hound guys loose. Your rule of forcing houndsmen to kill the first lion they have a reasonable chance of harvesting is asinine as well. The beauty of hound hunting is it is like catch and release fishing. It allows hunters to be selective and only harvest mature cats, preferably males. You guys have a powerful conservation tool in houndsmen that you are not utilizing. If you are trying to reduce the population and your biologists say we need X amount of males killed and X amount of females killed the only way you can feasibly accomplish that is by hounds. It works in other states and it will work here. The number of kittens and females being killed in this state is shameful. How about treating the lions like the ultimate trophy animal they are instead of like coyotes?
- 3835 The use of dogs would be beneficial in the Black Hills. Hunters could tree lions and decide whether or not to shoot them depending on size and gender.
- 3836 In my opinion there are too many mountain lions in the Black Hills. Just about every time I go out with snow on the ground I can cut tracks. And in certain areas the deer and elk populations are suffering greatly. One area in particular there was a large male, a large female or smaller male, and a female with 2 Cubs. I would cut their tracks on a regular basis. That was in an area/loop I walked every time out. The deer have disappeared in that area over the last year and a half. That is potentially 250 deer/elk per year killed and eaten. Mountain lions, I have heard, eat a deer per week. With 5 in a small area that's devastating. And that's not the only area that's like that. Seems like that is happening all over the hills.
- 3848 No snow in southern hills made it somewhat hard for tracking.
- 3871 Don't like the use of dogs.
- 3884 Allow Dogs during the season
- 3887 Just request that you keep as many of the trails open as possible. So many of the gates were closed again, so it was very frustrating.
- 3896 The burning of the slash piles did not help in keeping the cats in the area that I was planning on hunting.
- 3907 Great season, not much snow for tracking though, good time!
- 3915 The Black Hills seems odd in the number of cats available and harvested per square mile when compared to other areas in the United States. I think the Mtn lion population is getting better but is still not within the norms of neighboring areas. I appreciate the current quota of 50 females and 75 total Cats harvested, I believe this is helping correct the population in this area.
- 3922 would love to be able to use dogs in the Black Hills, as eventually we will need to identify the females
- 3927 Every time a mountain lion kills a deer or elk or sheep or goat it takes away a tag from a paying hunter.

- 3955 Although I only hunted one day (well about 3-4 hours) we didn't see any signs of a mountain lion. We only heard coyotes but 3-4 hours is a short time. Overall this is the first season I hunted and it was exciting being out in the field and trying to call one in.
- 3960 I would like the season shortened to two months rather than three.
- 3971 We did find a deer kill under brush and hunted that area hard No snow poor conditions another weekend we found an older kill that coyotes had finished I think the predator population is too large , I miss seeing all the elk/deer even porcupines we use to see in the late 1990s early 2000-2005
- 3979 Better for deer, elk, and other big game.
- 3984 Thank you for establishing a mountain lion season...I believe it necessary to control the population of these animals to deter encroachment and assimilation into urban areas.
- 3985 Please make sure that the seasonal roads are clearly posted and somehow controlled to prevent unauthorized use by motor vehicles. A lot of distortion in hunting areas. Thank you.
- 3994 I did not hunt this year because I never got my tag I paid for. I was told it takes a while to get it never came. I went hunting with a friend though it was lots of fun and we ran into a lot of tracks.
- 3996 Love the opportunity to harvest a mountain lion. Although I wasn't successful I enjoyed the affordable cost of a tag and the length of the season.
- 4019 my dad had a tag for Custer State Park with dogs and never seen a lion on the whole season...last season, walked a lot and put a lot of time in.
- 4024 the lack of snow hindered most people's ability to track the lions. I didn't hunt very much because of the lack of snow.
- 4026 PLEASE allow baiting next year. with limited amounts of snowfall there is not much chance of being successful. If you continue NOT to reach your yearly quota, the population will get out of hand and they will hurt the deer and elk population, I don't think baiting is any different than sitting on a kill site. PLEASE ALLOW BAITING.
- 4033 The year was tough weather wise. I understand that, it made it tough for hunting. More and more we are seeing mountain lions east river. I have had prints in front of my shop and one was spotted a quarter mile from my house again this winter. The deer and elk herds are shrinking dramatically in the Black Hills. The number of mountain lions tagged every year needs to increase. Either longer seasons or the use of dogs need to be implemented throughout the Black Hills. This was the second year in a row the number tagged is down. Only reason is the weather.
- 4034 Need to be able to use hounds like rest of state.
- 4035 The aid of hounds would be nice.
- 4037 allow dogs in park
- 4039 We need to be able to use hounds in the hills!!
- 4052 The season needs to be longer. The use of dogs needs to remain the way it is now. It would be helpful if kills were mapped and that information made available via the internet

at the time of the kill. Also, there is a lot of motorized traffic on closed roads, at least in the northern hills.

4055 Lack of snow was the deciding factor on my minimal hunting participation.